RAF SIMONS REDUX

FONDAZIONE PITTI DISCOVERY / CHARTA

Raf Simons is one of the great innovators of contemporary men's fashion. His clothes, characterised by a tight and linear silhouette, combined tailor traditions with rebel-youth outfits from all ages and represented, during the mid-nineties, a radical shift in redefining menswear. They were able to express the change in sensibility and attitude of men in the nineties. For Raf Simons, art, music, performance and photography are a fundamental part of a flexible and coherent aesthetic system where fashion is, at the same time, productive terminal and project synthesis. Raf Simons' eclectic and easily recognisable work has often come across the projects of the Fondazione Pitti Discovery. The vivid images of his first shows, the classical and restless faces of his adolescent models, his guiding collaborations, his pedagogical efforts. Everywhere one looks, the aesthetics and culture of Raf Simons have represented a constant source of exploration and comparison for the reflections and projects on the relationship between fashion and other contemporary languages that the Fondazione has developed during these past years. For this reason, we wanted to be the ones to chronicle the first decade of his work and, together, usher in a new creative phase in his career. *Raf Simons Redux* is, in fact, a professional and personal biography, a detailed catalogue of the collections, works and the many special projects realised up to now and, finally, a repertory of themes and sources of inspiration. But there is also a sentimental side to all this – the friendship and esteem that has grown during these years among the Fondazione Pitti Discovery, Raf Simons and his collaborators/friends from Antwerp. A book, therefore, that bears witness to and re-reads the work of one of the greatest talents that men's fashion has produced in the past few years.

Lapo Cianchi
Fondazione Pitti Discovery Secretary-General and Proxy

FOREWORD

Raf Simons

Raf Simons, as the world knows the label, is not me. Or better: not solely about me. It has always been, and will always continue to be, about us, about we, about you. The last ten years would mean absolutely nothing if it weren't for the people close to me. At the same time, it would all be worthless without the interaction of the audience, the people who wear the clothes, everyone who takes even the slightest interest in what we do.

The togetherness is the reason why I took up fashion ten years ago. Before, when I was doing industrial design, I was always working alone in an atelier, shut from the outside world. I actually liked what I was doing, even the part of driving nails in wood with my own hands, but constantly working all by myself was horrible. Fashion is completely different. Day in, day out, there's interaction with assistants, friends, models, magazines, shops. Fashion leads to different projects and new collaborations. A decade ago, I had the instinctive feeling that choosing fashion would take me closer to a particular kind of people, to a special kind of feeling. It makes me feel proud that I somehow achieved to connect or work with true individuals. More than the clothes and the recognition, they have been the driving force. And seeing the pride they take in building our collective world still touches me deeply. I can only hope our special circle remains unbroken, forever.

This book goes to the real heart and soul of ten years of my life. It shows the work and the intentions, but I also wanted to bring forward some heroes of mine (collaborators, artists, writers, friends), letting them interpret those ten years and/or the common ground among us. Some of them already made name, some are not so well-known, but all matter equally to me. These contributions together with the work under my own name tell the true story of ten years of Raf Simons. This book is not a retrospective or the closing of a chapter. It's the beginning of another cycle, of another ten years . . . of the future. And the future is us, we, you.

Here, I especially like to thank Peter De Potter, who made this book look and feel and speak the way it does now. Put through his eyes and mind, I rediscover an essential part of my life printed on paper, divided in chapters, in all its honesty.

1995–2005: Thank you to everybody involved in these years.

FOREWORD

Peter De Potter

Raf and me – we are the Nicky brotherhood. Other people might look at our two members only-congregation as just another Nicky Wire (of Manic Street Preachers) fan club, but both of us know the word "Nicky" means so much more, so we don't care. For the uninitiated, it would take a long, deep plunge into the complete history and output of the Manics to fully understand, so just take it from me that "Nicky" stands for conviction, fervour, pride, defiance and self-belief against one's own lucky or unlucky fate. When Nicky Wire falls to his knees onstage, bass guitar low, his eyes closed, lost in melody and noise, singing along to the very words he himself wrote, it's not your typical freeze-framed rock pose. It's the very white-out of deliverance and intent and melancholia all true art has, or should have. Life the Nicky way is what all of us like to aspire to. Above all, "Nicky" stands for passion.
There's so, so much passion in Raf's head and heart. He's a believer – always. Take anyone working in his office or somehow associated with him as an example. He has this ability to see the spark in people, no matter what background or possible shortcomings, and then fan the flame until it becomes a glowing fire. Passion is what drives his work, too. If there's one thing I wanted to get across with this book, it's this: put aside, although never erase, the schoolboy, the robot, the goth drop-out, the protester, the nature kid, the space-age casual. They're only symbols, indicators. What they really convey is pure emotion without any trickery. Raf has proved that, in one big natural swoop and before the commentators can make their seasonal shopping round-up, fashion can indeed say something all-encompassing and essential about masculinity, society, individuality and freedom. Whispering, wondering, hesitant, shouting, jubilant or unafraid, Raf's voice has always been for real. And I'm glad that the world has been taking note.
In 1991, Nicky Wire changed my life when he and Richey wrote the lyrics to "Motown Junk". Five years ago, Raf also radically, positively redirected my own route by inviting me wholeheartedly into his world. If it wasn't for him, I probably would still hide my strange scribblings and paste-and-cuttings in a box under my bed.
If the cover and the spine of this book could have taken more letters and words, this excerpt from Wire's Manics lyric should have been the full title, because it truthfully sums up the full ten years of Raf Simons:

"It was no surface but all feeling
Maybe at the time it felt like dreaming"

Raf: Nicky *and* brotherhood.

MEMORY
IS
HOME

MEMORY IS MY HOME

MEMORY

MEMORY IS MY HOME

IS
MEMORY
HOME

MEMORY IS MY HOME

MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME

(previous) Memory Badges 1 (revisiting Spring–Summer 1996) by Peter De Potter. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

Ashley Heath

Aphex, Raf, Wong Kar Wai.

There. Five words, three people. When push came to shove, that is all I wanted to write for his book. Five short words containing such a lot of magic. Three people who changed such a lot of what is now taken a little too much for granted. (Maybe you do not take it for granted at all. Maybe you live in another world altogether. That could be a problem.)

Aphex, Raf, Wong Kar Wai. Sounds really good. Magic words in my head – though Raf sounding a bit like Ralph, the clown figure in *Happy Days*. I just ran at the end of a summer's day to really test those five words out. Great words.

I did not write Helmut Lang, Quentin Tarantino, Timbaland "N" Missy – and there must be a reason. Too many words that together sound wrong, right? Or is it just that it is Raf's book and that in this wan light this second list crossed over too much, had the hits, made the bacon, lost the bleeding-edge?

But no, it is not any of that at all. It is something else, and it has something to do with influence and sensitivity and subtle genius and a real magic that is hung about in the air for a while now. Almodovar, McQueen, RZA. Quite like that one, actually. John Galliano, William Orbit, Zhang Yimou. Play along at home. This is just silly, infectious, worthless, rubbish. But I would love this book to offer lots of clues to the contrary.

Raf Simons ranks right up there for me. That is the real point I want to get across here. Enter and inhabit his world a bit and your world will surely be a far better place. And there are a thousand reasons why, although none of them actually have anything much to do with adolescent angst or gangs of isolated teenage boys. Get beyond all that now. Dig deep, deep dig.

My loose brief here was a short polemic on both my friend Raf Simons and ten years of relevant popular culture. So I went away and thought and my mind started doing the math and I decided that this was in truth a mad, bad, sometimes sad, forty chapter love story spanning two or three continents . . . although in its place I did conclude that those first five words above do a pretty interesting job.

Stop now. Enough of the lists and the bewildering indulgent start. (But don't you just hate it when great inspiring books have tidy essay introductions? And don't American magazine editors just take the heavyweight oat biscuit on that front?)

But I really did want to jump around a bit and get strange and maybe messy. That was my second impulse. Strange, messy, silly, a bit of humour perhaps. Because that is not Kraftwerk, is it? That is not stark arresting Joy Division graphic. That is not even neurotic boy outsider – with cape, neoprene diving suit and unforgiving Guido haircut.

No strange silly smiles in this Raf Simons world, right? No, very wrong. And while you are enjoying exploring this book, maybe you should reconsider *The Man Machine*, too. Models. Looking good. Cities. Lights. Machines, machines, machines, machines, machines. Smile? I have never stopped laughing.

A quick machine list of the other over-riding Raf reflections shorting my circuits: 1. He does not really reference fashion history. If Raf Simons' latest collection has a "thirties" or "forties" trouser shape, it is unlikely that Raf ever looked at any thirties or forties fashion imagery. I know this for sure; 2. There is often less originality in the referencing of inspirations by Raf Simons the designer than there is originality in the way they are then executed, employed, re-interpreted. I know this has much to do with Antwerp and Belgium and Raf's particular, wonderful world; 3. Raf's marvellous world surely has something of a Peter Pan spirit, with Raf's close friends – Robbie Snelders, Olivier Rizzo, Peter De Potter – all key characters with key roles to play. Except Raf Simons is less like Peter Pan than a modest head prefect figure. I know this might sound more *Lord of the Flies* than crocodiles and cannon balls, but strangely it does not; 4. Raf's future world is surely more of the same but now even better and in better fabrics. I know the Jil Sander story will become a key part of this happy tale.

Once upon a time . . . there was a proud port city on the Scheldt River in the kingdom of Belgium. I wonder, have you been to Antwerp? Have you heard how they talk in that strange land? Well, it is not at all the way Raf Simons himself speaks. He actually uses words like "interzone" in his sentences. Words that only Beecroft or Ballard or Curtis ever used, and then surely not in everyday conversation.

I properly interviewed Raf just once, in the days soon after he returned from his millennial sabbatical. This was the time of menswear's brave fashion ascendancy (rather than its present over-populated position of media overkill), and it was important that Raf came to London to formally explain his new business position and new creative stance. I dragged him up to Camden Lock – not that he objected in the slightest – mainly so Raf could talk to me about Green Velvet around the corner from "The Cell" where Soft Cell recorded the incredible *Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret* album. I remember that seemed important to me at that time. Unfortunately, the subsequent feature ended up a little too much "Erotic Cabaret" and I was a little too much of the willing sinner when it came to repeating the established Raf riff. We did manage to bump into Vanessa Beecroft, though.

What that interview feature should have said a little more is: "Hang on, who the hell actually says things like 'it's an interzone'. Who really talks like that?" And I should have asked a few more questions like "Just what does Raf Simons actually mean when he uses a word as apparently straightforward as 'adolescent'?" Because the often peculiar, always particular words that emerge from Raf's mouth do give clues to the abstract associations being made in his brain. These associations, and so many are here in his book, are key to the work's strength. And further, if you want an insight into how Raf Simons manages to execute such stunning work often from well-trodden reference material, then the secret is surely all in the translation. Because when London has pretty much sold its pop culture down its own river, and when New York is still an island that is too self-satisfied to really reverberate, it takes an intelligent obsessive emotional designer working from Antwerp to put the right spin on things. Found in translation, or at least something like that.

The wider interaction between Flanders and the rest of Europe's pop cultural landscape is a fascinating subject, one that I would like to think has already spawned a clever thesis or two at a couple of shadowy Belgian fashion academies. The crucial point being that things just turn out different around those parts. Your average clichéd history of pop culture just does not count for much in Flanders. Oasis and Blur and the heady nineties? Well, actually Elastica were a much bigger, more resonant sound in Antwerp, and certainly Raf Simons deeply loved Elastica (as well as very early Suede) while completely rejecting the rest of the whole Blur versus Oasis Brit pop bash.

Bands that are often rejected at either first base or after years of success in Britain are often very important in Belgium. A consideration of the last ten years of the Flanders scene would see names like Placebo, Depeche Mode,

Smashing Pumpkins and The Cure all ranking rather high. Electro and vintage eighties cold wave have both always ruled there, so "electroclash" was always part of the Antwerp scene and close friends of Raf just laughed when naïve hacks working around London's Old Street got all excited about its "invention". While Belgium had fed happily on the golden age of British style magazines, with the sad demise of *The Face* and the subsequent evolution of Old Street's try-hard copy-cat titles, Antwerp just had to take matters into its own hands. They have their own heritage, after all.

Both Derrick May and Juan Atkins were on a Belgian bent (and vice versa) a long time before London and Madchester warmed up to those particular electronic innovators. Rave culture? Belgium had its own New Beat history, and it is not without some real political connotations that Raf Simons now has various key New Beat record sleeves decorating his first London shop space in Dover Street Market. Remember R&S Records? (Aphex!) Remember Joey Beltram? All key parts of the Belgian scene and revered to the point of huge cult statues long before the rest of Europe really caught up.

I am talking a bit of a bleak box of black vinyl here, I know, although I am old enough to believe it counts for something. And for reasons that should be obvious it is an inherent part of the DNA of Raf PLC. Stay with me for another couple of paragraphs and we will widen the net.

Consider Serge Gainsbourg – these days much like old Eno and well-worn Hazlewood a touchstone for futuristic retro louche lounge party fashion house music. Now Serge has been absolutely huge in Flanders for years now, attracting thousands to huge tribute parties. The wider festival scene also has evolved there to become a pivotal environment for the spread of energy, ideas and passions. Another summer, another Sisters Of Mercy incarnation will surely oversee happy bleeding carcasses stretchered away from the body electric of the festival site. The most committed of the main stage floorshow are in their teens. Basically take the darkest, most romantic heart of western pop culture and cross it with a brutal techno pulse and you are close to where the Belgian spirit inevitably lies. It is after all the land that clung tight to David Lynch, to *Betty Blue* (*37° 2 le matin*, as that movie should read), while largely ignoring *Withnail and I* and much other transatlantic bedsit posturing. Larry Clark? Not much of an Antwerp hero to tell the truth. Pedro Almodovar? There is virtually a statue in the main square. And Raf Simons, fashion designer, is only fully understood in this distinctive home environment.

The ultimate irony is that Raf's clothing ends up selling to East Village and SoHo style nerds who believe they are living at the heart of things. The designer himself will do little to dispel that impression. It is not the Antwerp way to brag or hype or even to criticise the standards elsewhere. It is the Antwerp way to investigate fully by researching properly, live it a little, love it a lot and see if it still looks and feels good after all that time and attention. In our interview in 2001, Raf spent much time paying respect to Helmut Lang and reminiscing over certain early Lang collections. "I went to an early show of his in Paris and I believed so much in what he was doing. I wanted to do that, too, . . . I was such a big fan. That cool, distant attitude and the clean, simple lines," revealed Raf. It is more than rare to hear such honesty in the bitchy competitive world of top-flight fashion.

But the truth is there were other far more important fashion influences on Raf Simons, and they all came out of Antwerp's own fashion academy in the early nineties, specifically the years 1992 and 1993. The aforementioned Peter De Potter (1992) and Olivier Rizzo (1993), as well as David Vandewal (1992), provided not just inspiration but also friendship and support as Raf began working towards his first catwalk presentation. This is perhaps the great untold story of Raf Simons and his special world, although in truth it is all here in this book. Do the math. Connect the dots.

A history of ten years of pop culture with reference to Raf Simons is a task I have largely shirked on these pages for a reason. I genuinely believe a history of ten years of Raf Simons with a few relevant paragraphs about pop culture, which this book now has, is of more worth in this world. There has never been a bad Raf Simons collection, just quite good ones, very good ones and others that have clearly set new standards in modern fashion. I am still looking at his incredible Autumn–Winter 2005–2006 show at least once a week on catwalking.com. While London and Britain have often let themselves down and sold their own stylish heritage short, it has taken a group of Belgian obsessives to remind us of what is what – of what we once had and what we all might have still. And while London and Paris and Milan and New York have all squabbled over fashion's corporate cash, it took one guy in Antwerp to show the entire men's fashion scene – the entire industry in truth – how the dream could be.

So, yes, Antwerp is The Interzone. But it is only Raf Simons who really talks it that way, walks it like that, too, and remains Peter Pan, star prefect and the head boy.

Aphex, Raf, Wong Kar Wai. Magic words in my head.

isolated heroes n°1: Robbie. Photographed by Raf Simons. Antwerp, 2000.

YOUTH

HELDEN

TRADITION

ISOLATION

MACHINES

FRICTION

NATURE

COMMUNITY

FUTURE

ARCHAEOLOGY

1.
YOUTH
(UNBROKEN)

Staf (boy).

TEENAGE
RIOT

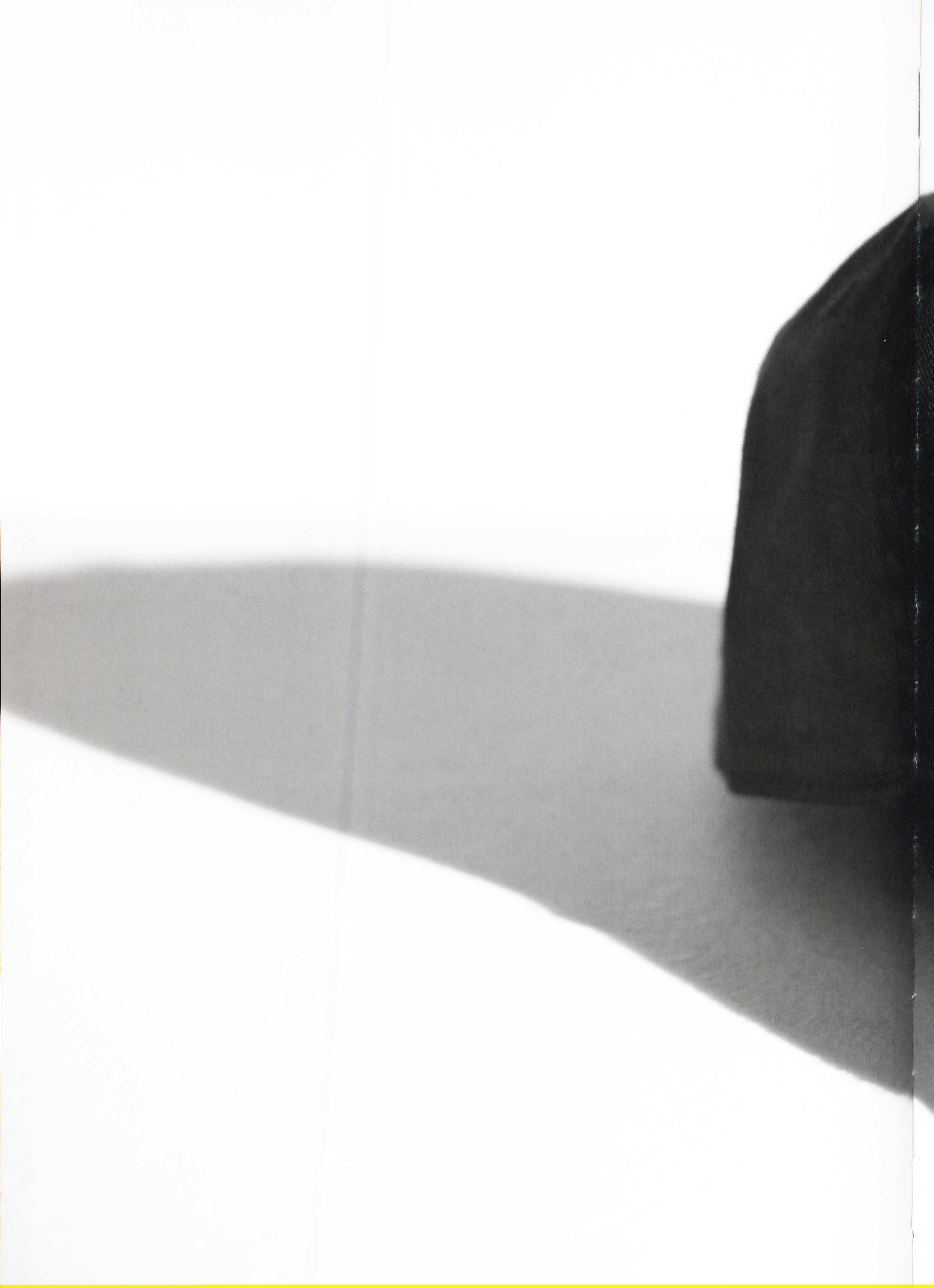
TEENAGE
RIOT

Spring–Summer 1998. Frederik. Photographed by Ronald Stoops. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Body make-up: Jos Brands. Paris, 1997.
(previous) Staf and Tim. Photographed by Ronald Stoops. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Antwerp, 1997.
(previous) Autumn–Winter 1999–2000 (flag). Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.

Gwen (boy).
Autumn–Winter 1999–2000 (flag). Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.

CLASS OF
RICHA
NEIL
ELLEN
GARY
SUZAN
BRIAN
KAREN
JOANN
SIMO
AUDREY
JACK

Staf and Tim. Photographed by Ronald Stoops. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Antwerp, 1997.
(next) Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*. Olivier Rizzo. Photo: Willy Vanderperre. Paris, 2005.

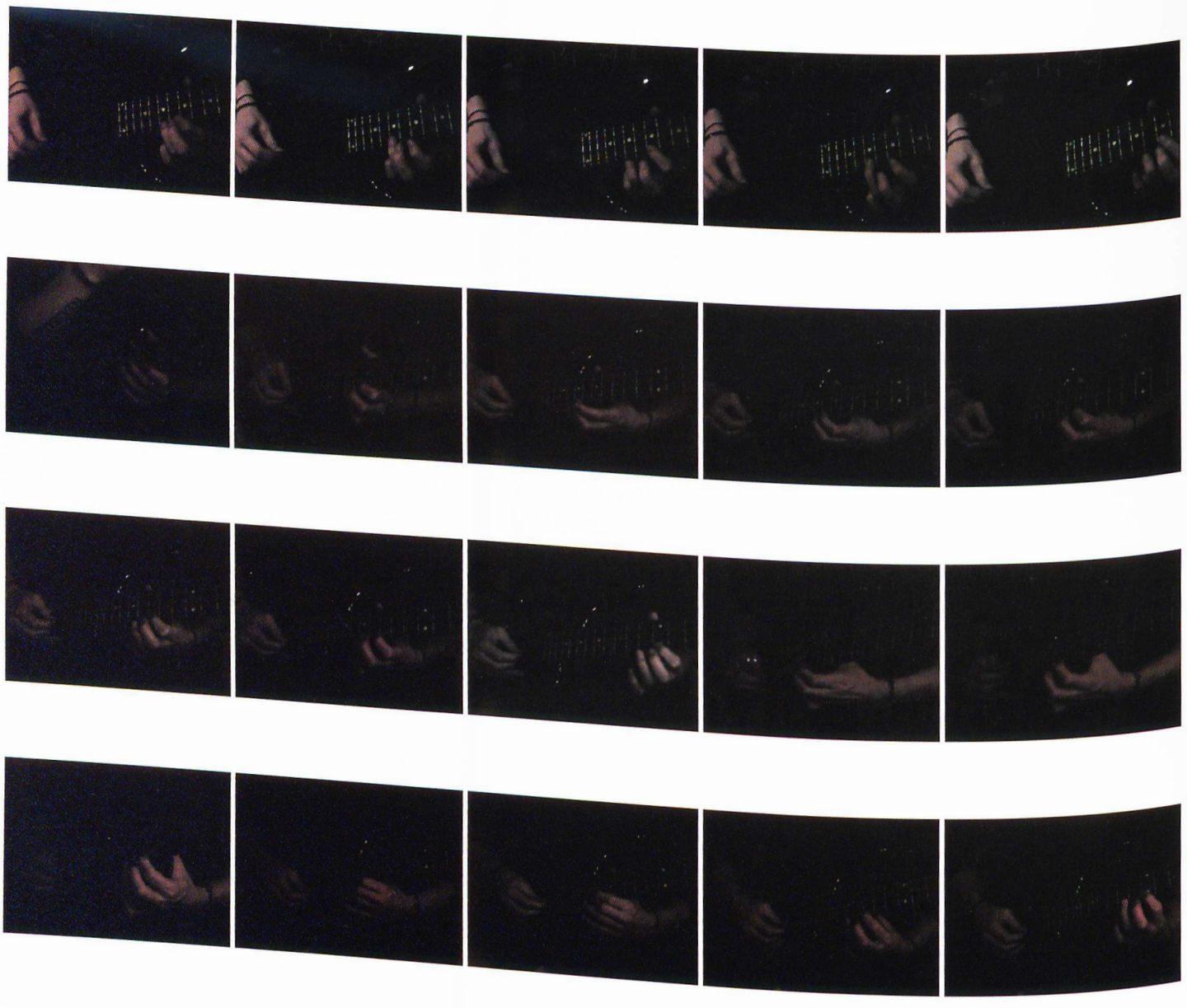


THANK YOU

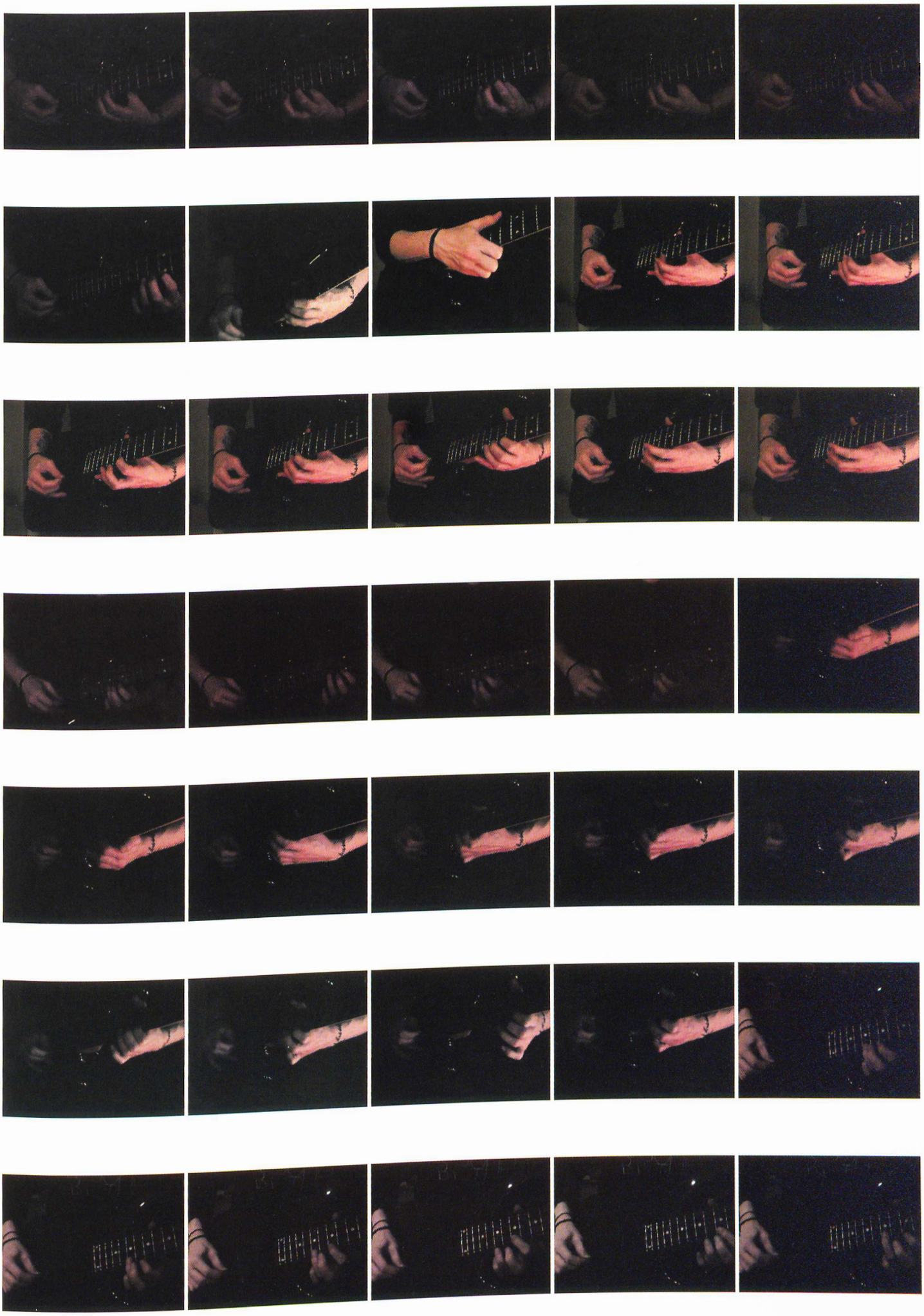
2.
HELDEN
/
HEROES

Robbie. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Grooming: Peter Philips. Antwerp, 1999.

SISTERS



Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Joy Division by Robbie Snelders. Antwerp, 2005.

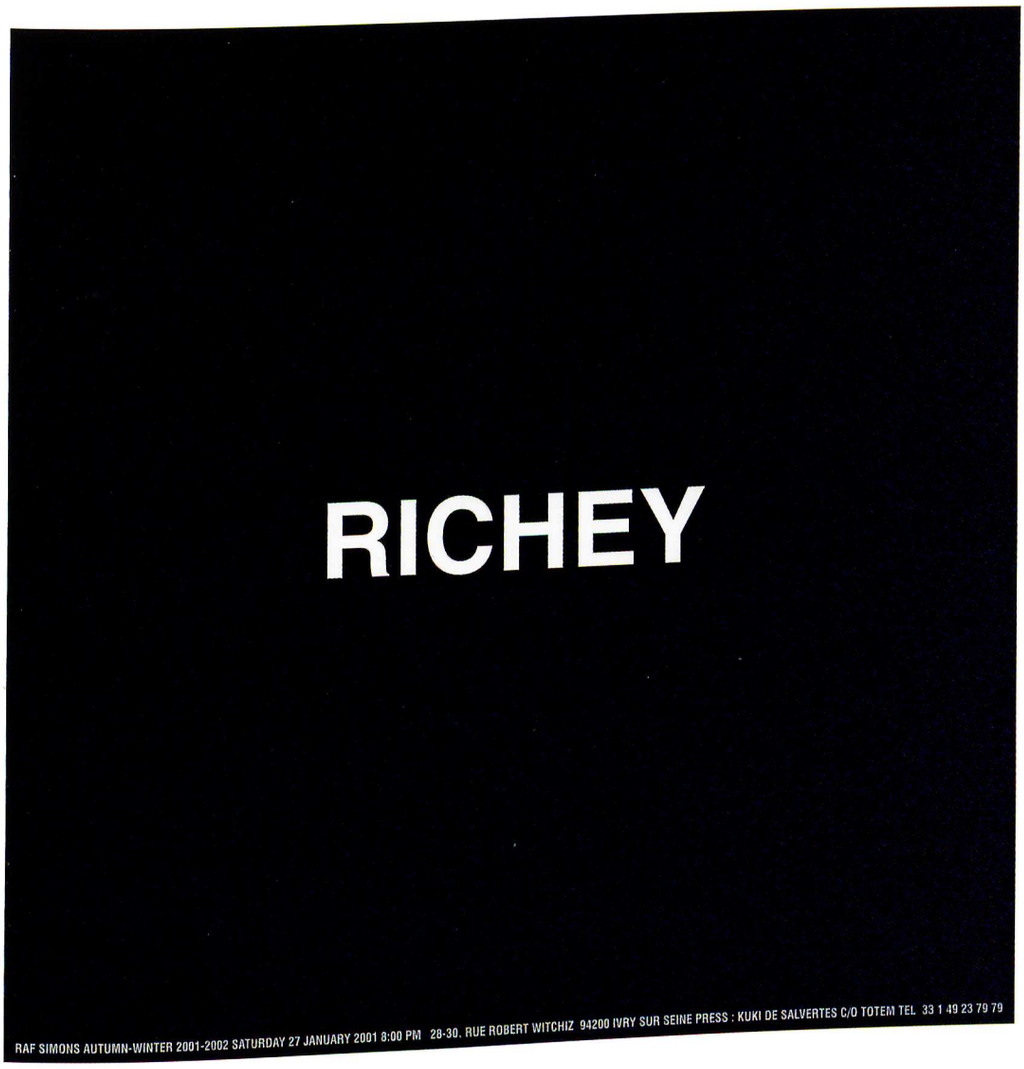


Print Autumn–Winter 2005–2006 by Peter De Potter with Robbie Snelders.

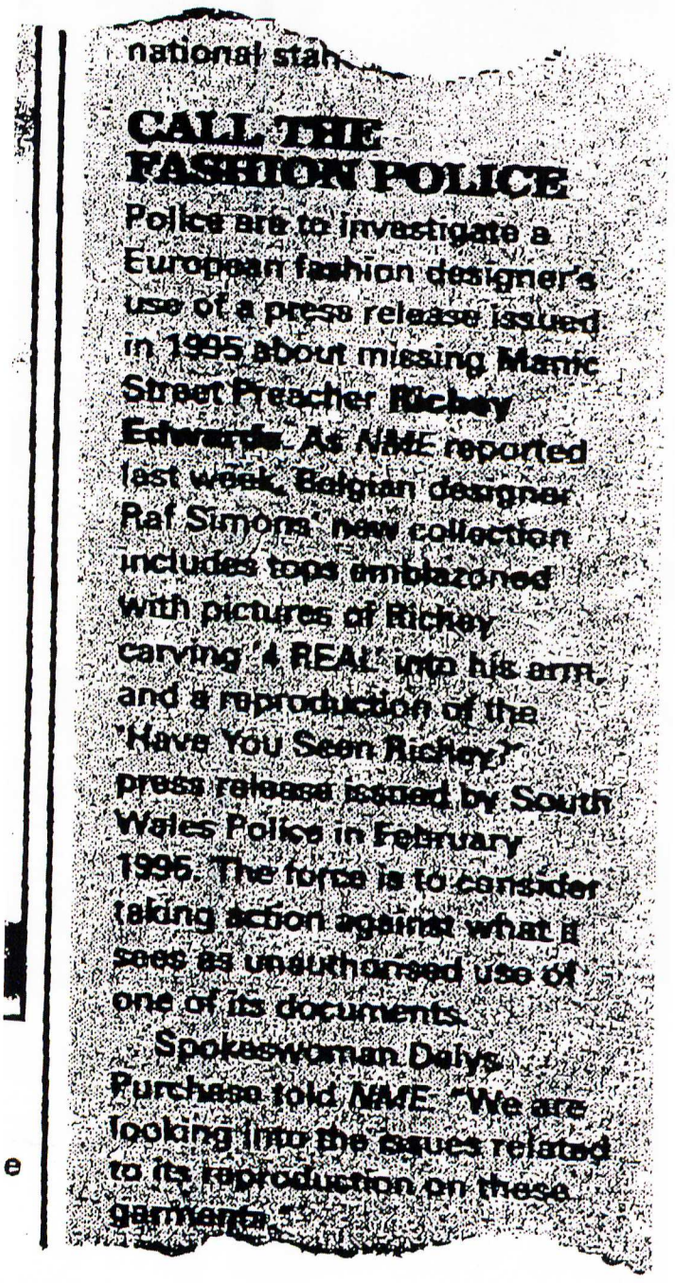
Autumn–Winter 2003–2004. Collaboration with Peter Saville. Hand-painting on garments executed by Stef Driesen and Antonietta Deluca. Cis, Johan, Peter. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Hair: Tom Malomgré. Make-up: Peter Philips. Paris, 2003.

ASHLEY
RAF SIMONS AUTUMN-WINTER 2001-2002 SATURDAY 27 JANUARY 2001 8:00 PM 28-30, RUE ROBERT WITCHIZ 94200 IVRY SUR SEINE PRESS : KUKI DE SALVERTES C/O TOTEM TEL 33 1 49 23 79 79

Invitation A show Autumn–Winter 2001–2002 (backside)


RICHEY
RAF SIMONS AUTUMN-WINTER 2001-2002 SATURDAY 27 JANUARY 2001 8:00 PM 28-30. RUE ROBERT WITCHIZ 94200 IVRY SUR SEINE PRESS : KUKI DE SALVERTES C/O TOTEM TEL 33 1 49 23 79 79

Invitation B show Autumn–Winter 2001–2002 (backside)



national stah

CALL THE FASHION POLICE

Police are to investigate a European fashion designer's use of a press release issued in 1995 about missing Manic Street Preacher Richey Edwards. As *NME* reported last week, Belgian designer Raf Simons' new collection includes tops emblazoned with pictures of Richey carving '4 REAL' into his arm, and a reproduction of the 'Have You Seen Richey?' press release issued by South Wales Police in February 1996. The force is to consider taking action against what it sees as unauthorised use of one of its documents.

Spokeswoman Dalys Purchase told *NME*: "We are looking into the issues related to its reproduction on these garments."

Cuttings from *New Musical Express* (faxed versions).

MISSING MANIC INSPIRES FASHION COLLECTION

...and the band show their approval, buying £170 jumpers

A European fashion designer's latest collection features images of missing **Manic Street Preachers** guitarist **Richey Edwards**, including the infamous *NME* cover shot of Edwards carving '4 REAL' into his arm. And *NME* can exclusively reveal that the Manics are fans of the collection.

Belgian fashion designer Raf Simons' menswear collection, some of which is pictured here, also features a reproduction of the South Wales Police press release put out when Edwards disappeared in 1995. The red and black striped jumper sells for £170 and the black sweatshirt is available for £185. Both tops feature Manic Street Preachers patches and setlists from Edwards' time in the band.

Jones of London's Covent Garden (13-15 Floral Street) stocks Simons' autumn and winter collections, which have created a huge buzz in the fashion industry.

Manager Kevin McDermott told *NME*: "It's the best collection he's ever done – everyone is raving about it. All the buyers and fashion people said it was the show of the season. We haven't had any negative reaction about the missing Manics guy."

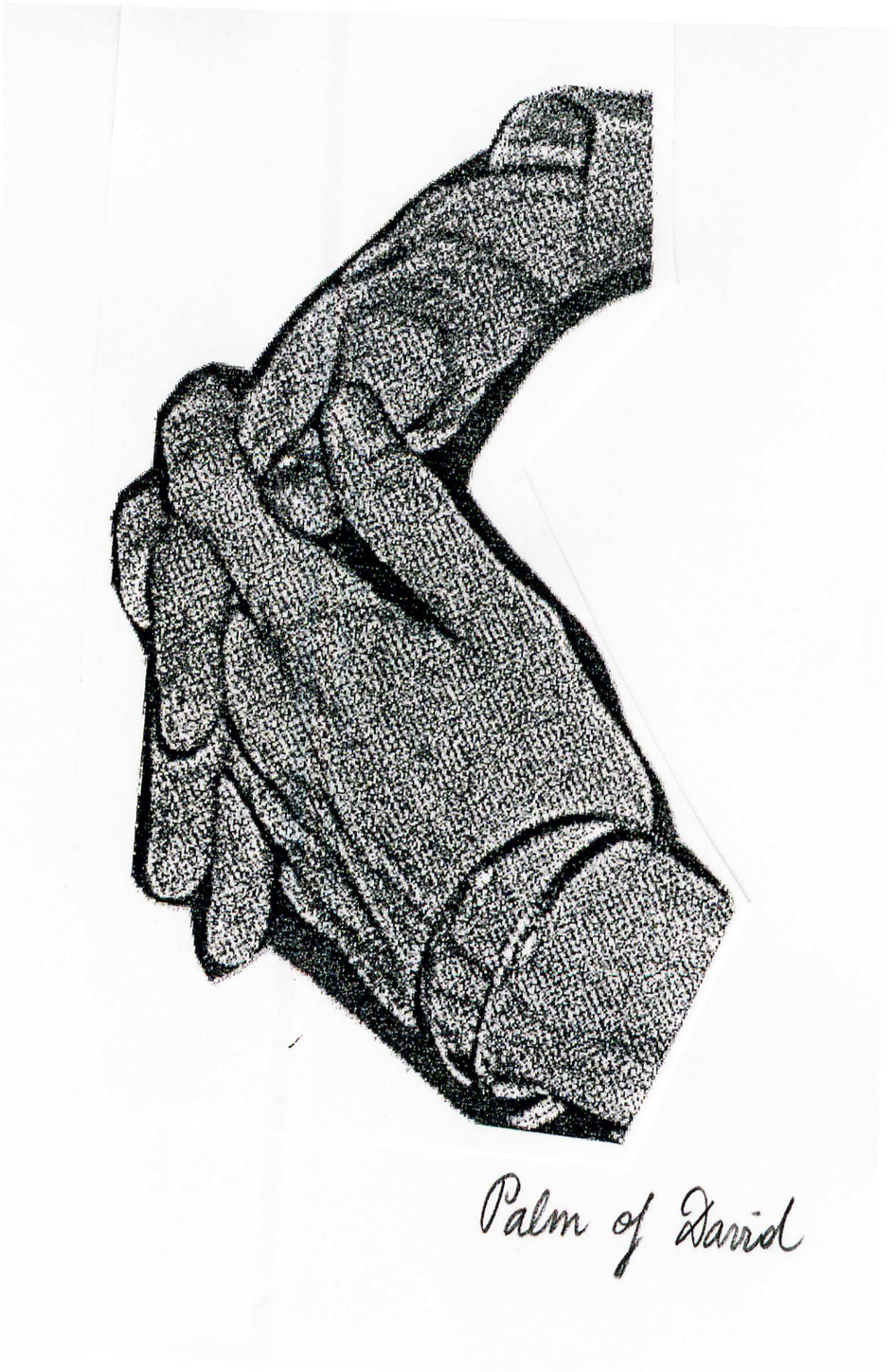
NME can also reveal that the Manics are set to wear Simons' outfits when they play their headline sets at the Carling Weekend. Lisa Nihei-Jackson served Manics bassist Nicky Wire when he bought a Raf Simons top from Jones. She told *NME*: "He said he was going to get the band decked out in them for Reading. I did wonder if he *(Wire)* might react badly, but he thought it was brilliant. He did ask if Raf Simons does ladieswear because he wanted a new dress."

Simons, 33, was unavailable for comment, although he said recently that the inspiration for the collection was, "Richey Edwards from Manic Street Preachers". He added that he wanted to see Richey and Nicky from the band wearing his clothes.

"Nicky Wire said he was going to get the band decke out in them for Reading."

The Manics' spokeswoman *NME*: "I don't know if Manics will be worried about this. Lo fans are making clothes out o Manics artwork anyway."

The latest Raf Simons colle is also stocked at Harvey Nich London Kensington store and several outlets in Covent Gar



Helden Hands, collage by Peter De Potter. Antwerp, 2005.

Robbie. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Grooming: Peter Philips. Antwerp, 1999.

3.
TRADITION (OXYGEN)

Jaak Simons (army).

Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Collier Schorr. *Base Portraits/Barracks*. New York, 2005.

Jaak Simons (army).

Collier Schorr. *Base Portraits/Barracks.* New York, 2005.

RAF, RAF'S FATHER, ME AND MINE

Collier Schorr

My nephew says that "the German youth has a torn-apart feeling". He is referring to the broken relationship German kids have with their own history. Until I asked him to pose in a Wehrmacht uniform, he had never seen one before. "Not even in a museum," he said with a strange limp in his voice that suggested he had been denied something of great necessity, and that feeling denied might, in itself, be problematic.

I wonder if young people can be made to experience war more vividly when dressed-up in the uniforms of their fathers and grandfathers – to fit their young bodies into olive and khaki jackets and shirts inscribed with stains and tears and smells from days spent in peacetime mess halls or on wartime battlefields.

I stole my father's army dog tag and nameplate when I was in my last year of high school. The tags became a talisman that could transport me into another era, allowing me to connect with a time from my father's past when he was someone else – a slim, smooth guy in a crisp cap and shirt, a guy who did not have to worry about us, a guy who was free.

Raf Simons' father, unlike my own, was a professional soldier. While my father would covertly find ways to sleep late and embarrass his commanding officers in front of visiting dignitaries, Raf's father thrived in a world of military order and ritual. My father was activated during the Berlin Crisis in 1962. He was shipped from the Bronx to Virginia, where the only things familiar to him were iced tea and muscle cars. But a professional soldier, by comparison, can never afford such vague disorientation. Being a professional soldier means always knowing your place. You always know where you need to be, what you need to do.

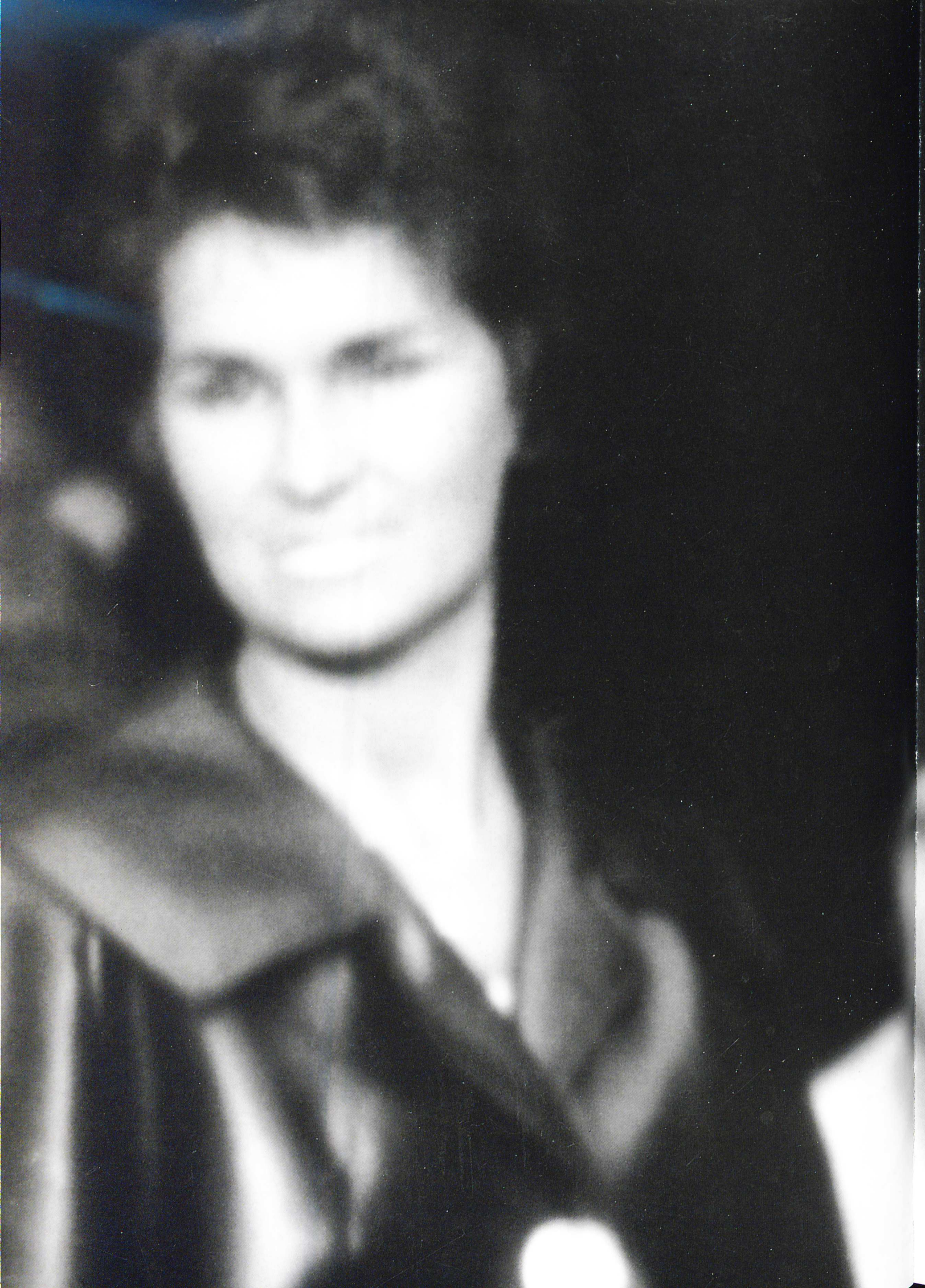
Raf's clothes are a rejection of all this. His clothes are not asked to do anything they do not want to do. They can be big or small – tightly fitting or loosely fitting – depending on the emotion they are supposed to suggest, as the figure wearing them moves across a room, free to improvise.

I once photographed a German boy in blackface wearing one of my father's army shirts. Picturing my father as a black soldier, resembling, no matter how obliquely, the first men I saw at a US army base in Germany, addressed the fallacy that my father ever identified himself as a soldier. I wanted to imply that I never knew my father as a man in a uniform, though I like to fantasise about how we would have got along back then, how we would have collaborated in overthrowing authority, while simultaneously admiring the razor sharp creases in our pants, starched, as they most surely would have been, from an aggressive army laundry.

The jacket of Raf's father has exceedingly wide shoulders and is made from rough, greyish-blue wool. To an American, it might resemble an Air Force blouson or, perhaps, a pleated version of the Eisenhower jacket. It has three nice patches that are not very impressive, but then again I am no expert on Belgian military clothing. In pictures I have seen of Mr. Simons, taken when he was a young man, he is wearing this jacket standing arm-in-arm with fellow soldiers. In one, in particular, he is on a bicycle; in another, jacketless, he is performing a handstand. I imagine that the jacket must be hanging from the back of a nearby chair. Maybe there is a pack of cigarettes in its breast pocket.

One year, I flipped through my German girlfriend's family photo album. I collected all the soldier pictures I could find to use as references – pictures of her great uncle in his SS uniform, of her father and older brother in Romanian uniforms of different generations, POW snapshots from a lower-ranking uncle. Spreading them all out on a table, the SS pictures stood out. There was something beyond pride in those strange images, an emotion I did not recognise. Yet, the Romanian pictures, and even the POW pictures, for that matter, all had a similarity to the pictures of Raf's father. They were small, black and white snapshots of men dressed identically, revealing in their sameness. Guys with arms draped across each other's shoulders, always smiling in the same way – prisoner or peacetime grunts – happy to be part of a team.

The jacket of Raf's father still smells of smoke. It is not necessarily a thing of beauty, but as I took some pictures of a twenty-two-year-old boy wearing it, I found I could imagine Raf trying it on when he was a teenager, maybe sneaking in front of a mirror to secretly measure himself against his father's history.



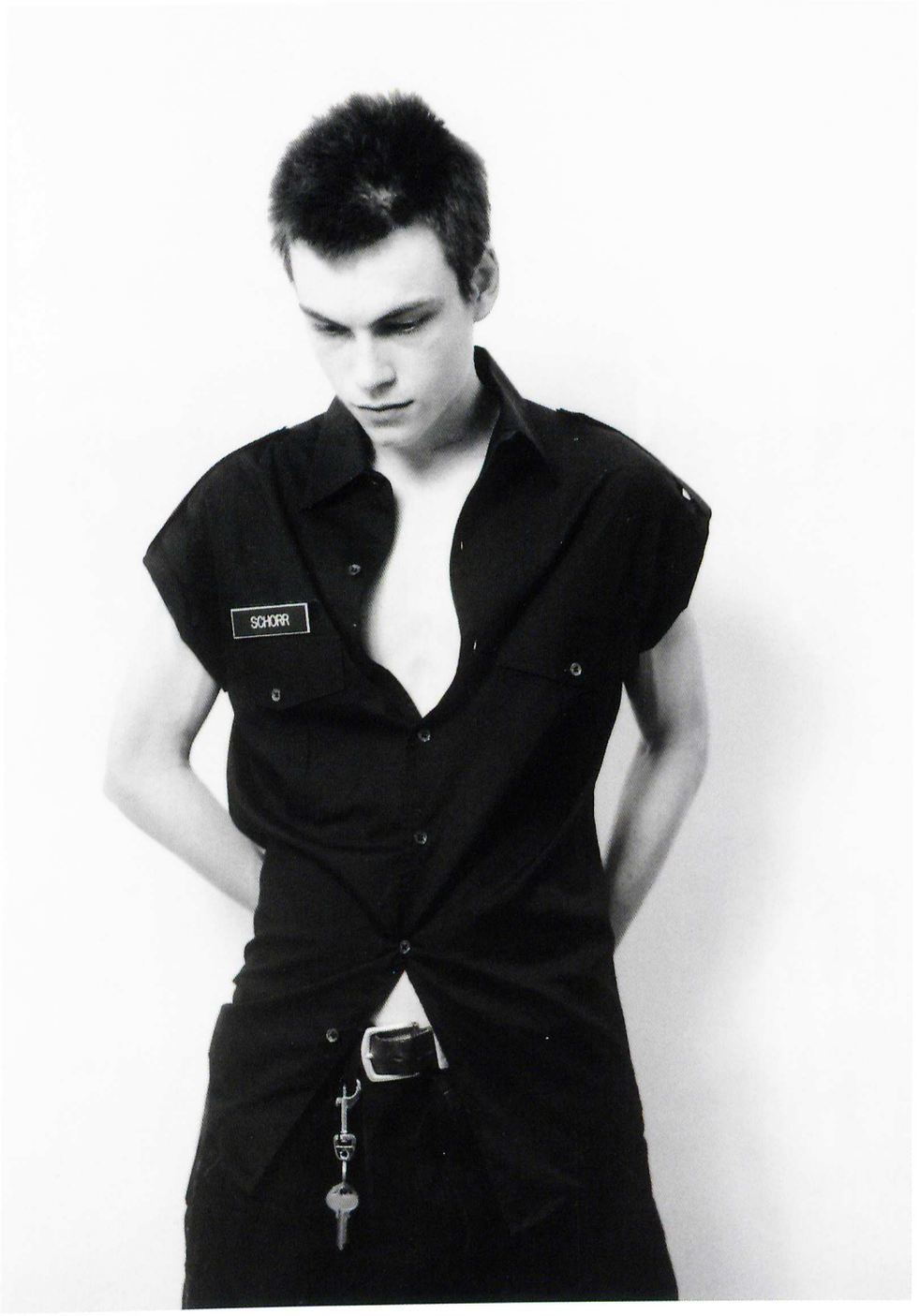
Collier Schorr. *Base Portraits/Barracks*. New York, 2005.
(previous) Alda Beckers/Simons & Jaak Simons.

Jaak Simons & Alda Beckers/Simons.

Collier Schorr. *Base Portraits/Barracks.* New York, 2005.

Alda Beckers/Simons & Jaak Simons.

Collier Schorr. *Base Portraits/Barracks.* New York, 2005.


SCHORR

4.
ISOLATION
-
SELF PORTRAIT (EVEN CLOSER)

Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Cris Brodahl, *Holy Star*, 135 x 145 cm, oil on canvas, 2005.

ON ISOLATION

Francesco Bonami

"Isola" in Italian means "island". The idea of isolation seems to be connected with the idea of an island. Though isolated places or people are not necessarily an island or on an island.

When I think of isolation, I think about Armenia – a country that found independence and isolation all at the same time. Armenia is a Christian Orthodox island floating in the ocean of Islam.

Isolation is a form of punishment in the penitentiary world. People who misbehave badly are put in isolation, deprived of any contact with the world and with other inmates. It is proven that people who stay in isolation for extended periods of time develop a murderous instinct, even if before they had never harmed anybody. Isolation is a vicious circle. Inmates who are in isolation tend to behave afterwards in ways that make isolation their destiny.

To be an island of your own could be your destiny. The Chicago writer Nelson Algren was convinced that you can be isolated even if you are skiing with hundreds of other people on a ski slope in Aspen.

Isolation is a state of mind that can be in fact very pleasant. The idea of being an island and the idea that people will not have access to you is a comforting feeling. Of course, we are talking about self-imposed isolation. I do not think that Napoleon, in his last exile on Saint Helena, would have shared this idea. The isolated mind produces a reality of its own, parallel to the reality shared by others. It is a different matter to kill in isolated reality, it is not a crime but a simple reaction to an intruder of the island. The writer Thomas Pynchon disappeared forever in the isolation of his own success. All true isolated people are success stories.

Islanders always fear the arrival of someone who could spoil their state of isolation; they live in endless tension. The goalkeeper before a penalty kick isolates himself from the crowds and from the rest of the team to concentrate on the ball that soon will break his isolation. Maybe the goalkeeper is the most isolated of all the players. That is why in the Wim Wenders movie – *The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick* – the man became a murderer. A goalkeeper has so much time to think, some much time to deal and lose his battle with his own personal demons.

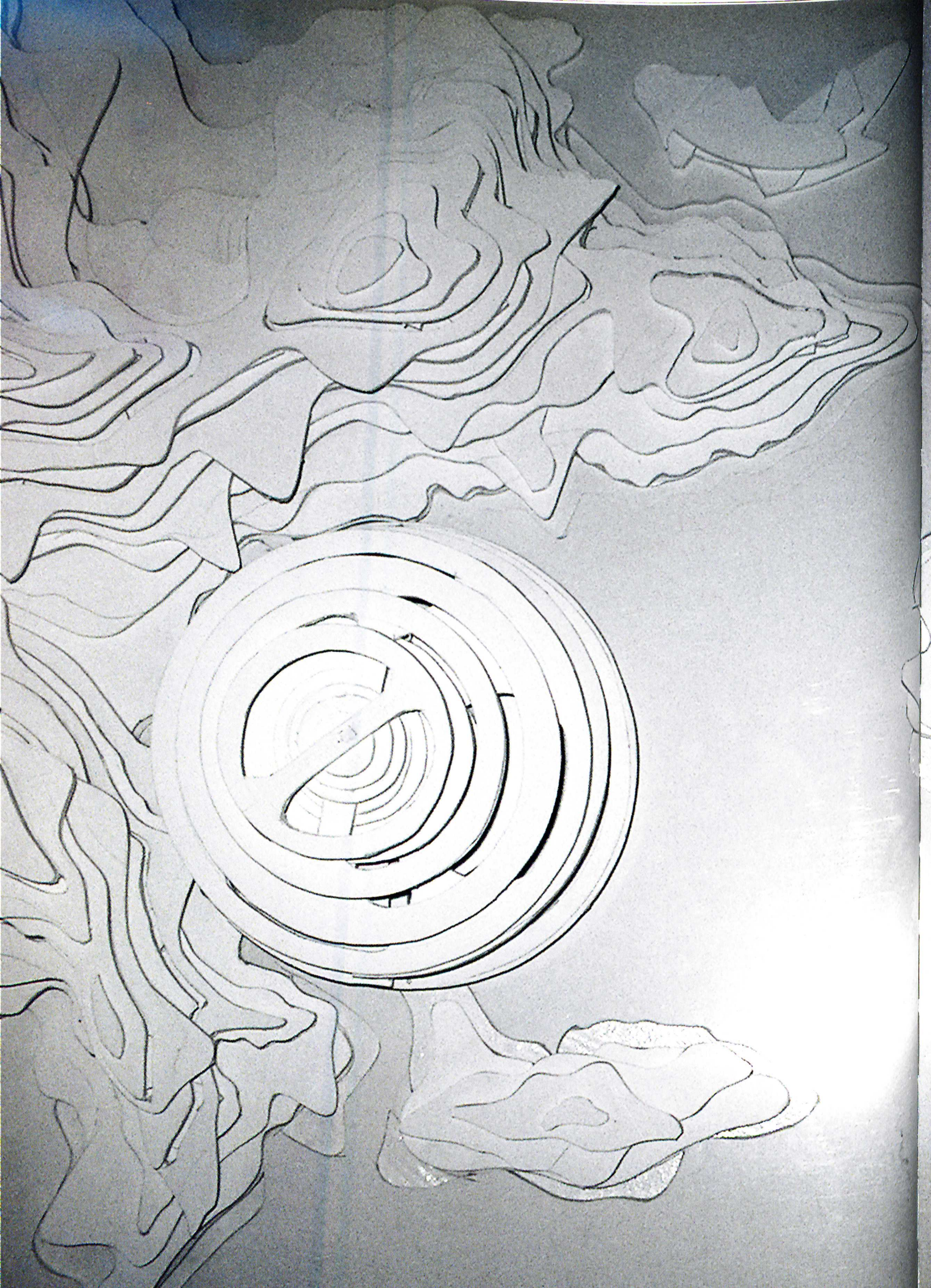
Spring–Summer 2003. Consumed. Photographed by Mario Sorrenti. Styling: Panos Yiapanis. *Arena Homme Plus*, no. 18, 2003.

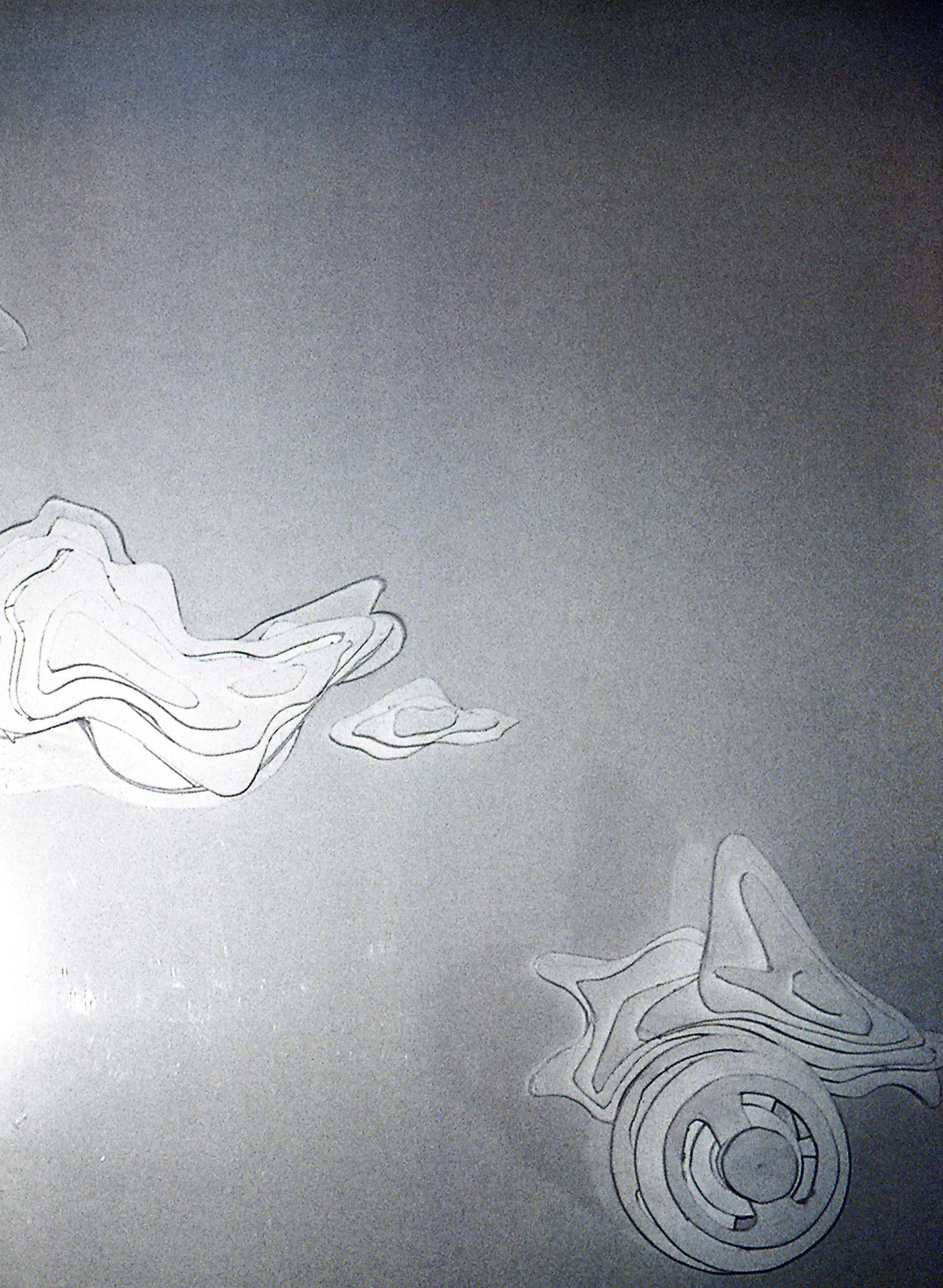
"Lock the world outside your mind" is a great motto. Kurt Cobain locked the world outside his mind. Not many people today succeed in locking the world outside. True isolation is, in the end, self-destruction. The moment you step outside of it you turn into your own victim.

A great sense of isolation is stored inside Gregor Schneider's home. A building that the artist transformed into a maze of isolated, dangerous spaces. He transformed his home into his mind, he transformed his mind into his home. Both are obsessive sites that developed a sort of autistic architecture. Autism is the way isolation is transformed into a fire-wall, a safety curtain of a society ruled by language. More and more people decided to belong to the culture of isolation. Autistic technology.

The iPod is the ultimate instrument of isolation. The more we are able to connect with other people without the need to see them, to talk with them, the more the culture of isolation becomes the dominant state of our civilisation. Today, in a city like New York it is possible to self-imprison ourselves. Food, information, drugs can be delivered in front of our doors, making the contact with the outside world useless. We can die without having seen a person for years. We can build architectural burkas where it will be possible to hide our social and gender identity. While surrounded by the noises and the blabbering of other people spending half their lives on cell phones, we mutated into a different kind of human being. By now, we switch on the isolation button automatically. The more the others share their lives with us, the more their lives become meaningless to us.

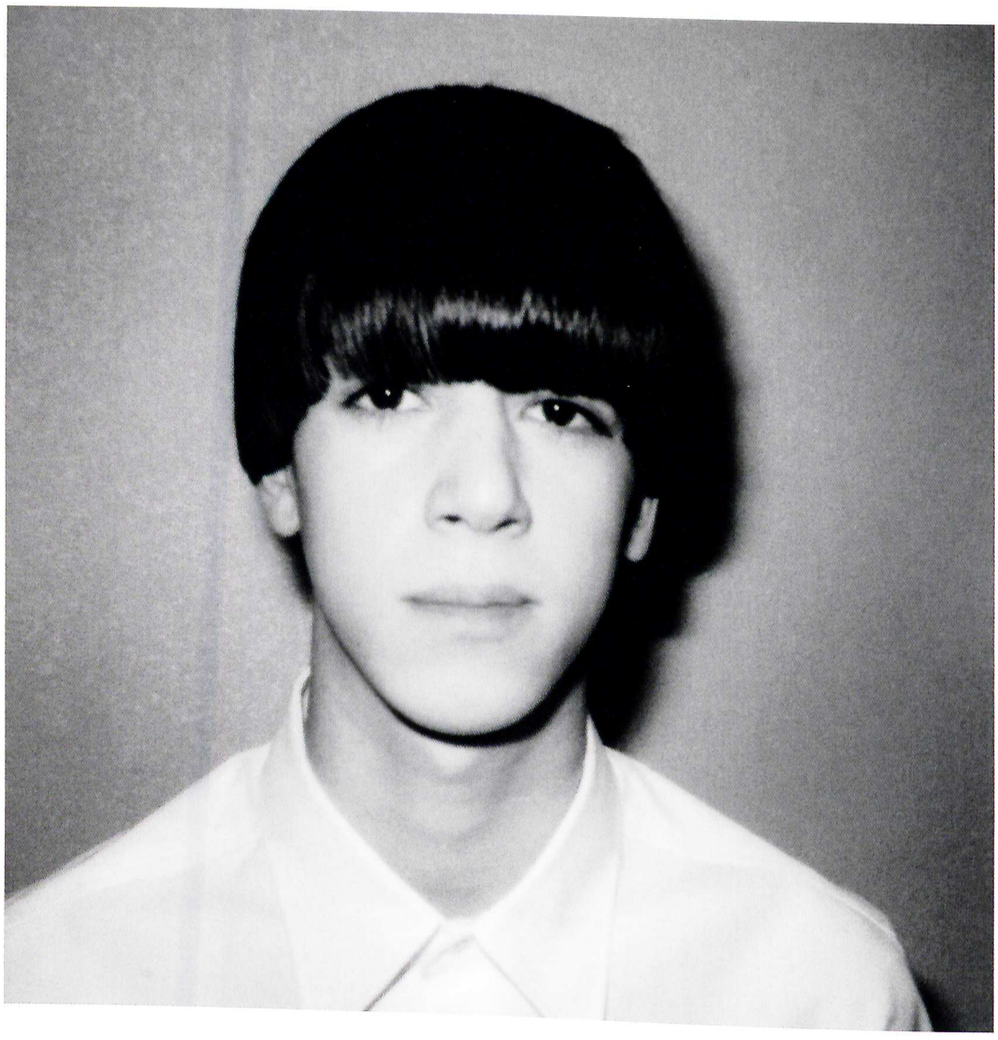
Music is the new silence. Words are the new feelings. Loneliness is the new screaming crowd that surrounds us. Like stones, we learn the impossibility to kiss another stone. Like stones, we wait for someone to throw us against the glass walls of our isolation. Like stones, we imagine being islands, faraway in the middle of the ocean.





Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Pieter Mulier. Antwerp, 2005. Maquette/scale model, 101 x 81 x 31 cm, white cardboard. Photo: Keith Hioco.
"Rather than an actual representation of an environment, this is an evocation of a feeling, the feeling I get when I think of Raf. We share many interests, architecture being one of them. We often talk about imaginary buildings and spaces, so this scale model is a factual continuation of our conversations. It's also a flashback to my training years at the design school . . . It's about isolation and escape, but also about mystery and breaking away from reality" – Pieter Mulier.

I
N



Autumn–Winter 1999–2000. Anthony. Photographed by Bert Houbrechts. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips. Paris, 1999.

Autumn–Winter 1999–2000. Steven. Photographed by Bert Houbrechts. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips. Paris, 1999.

Spring–Summer 2004. Daouda (studio Raf Simons). Antwerp, 2003.

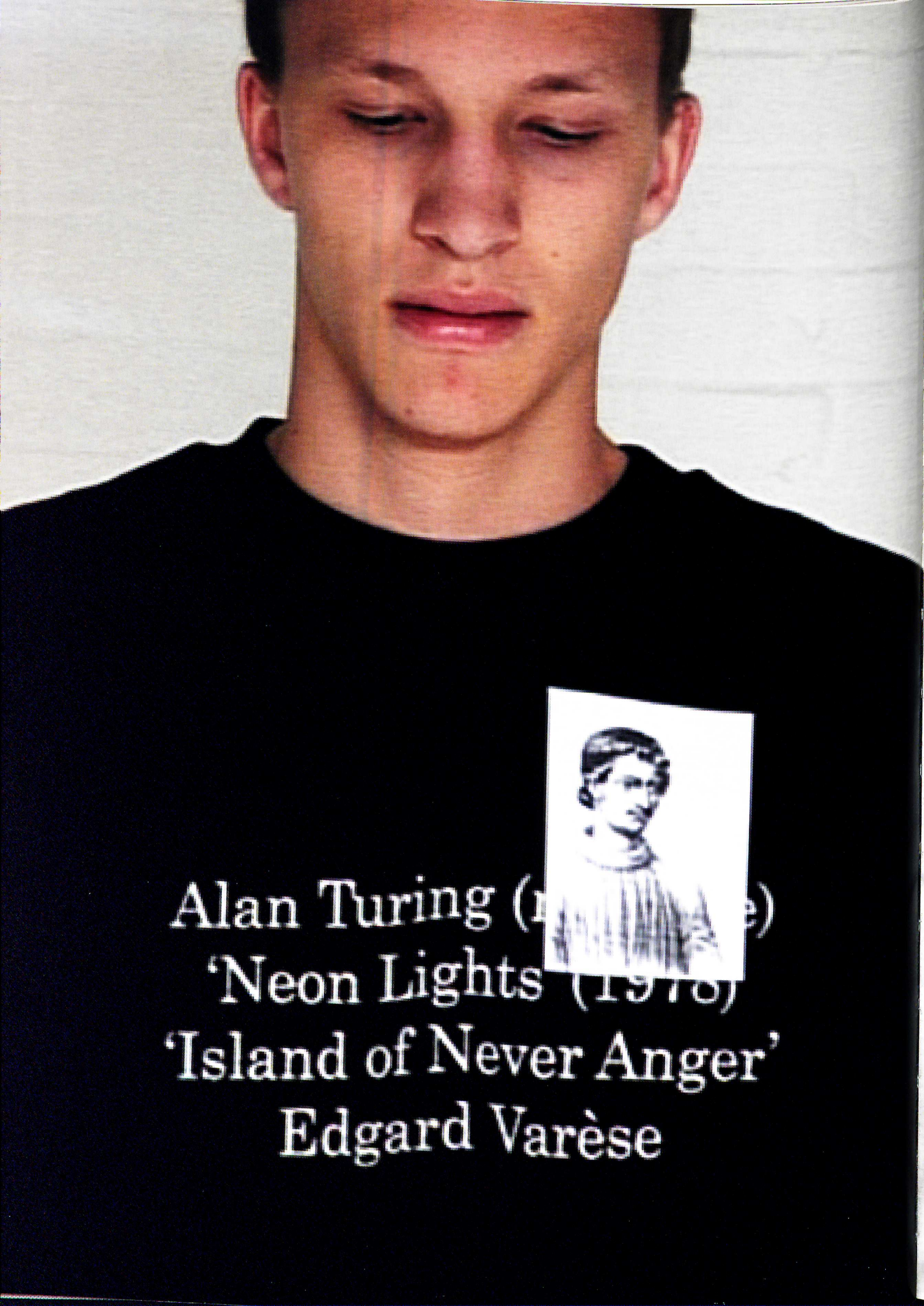
Autumn–Winter 2002–2003 (show). *20020126-01*, Steven Klein, 2002.
Autumn–Winter 2002–2003 (Manu backstage). *20020126-02*, Steven Klein, 2002.

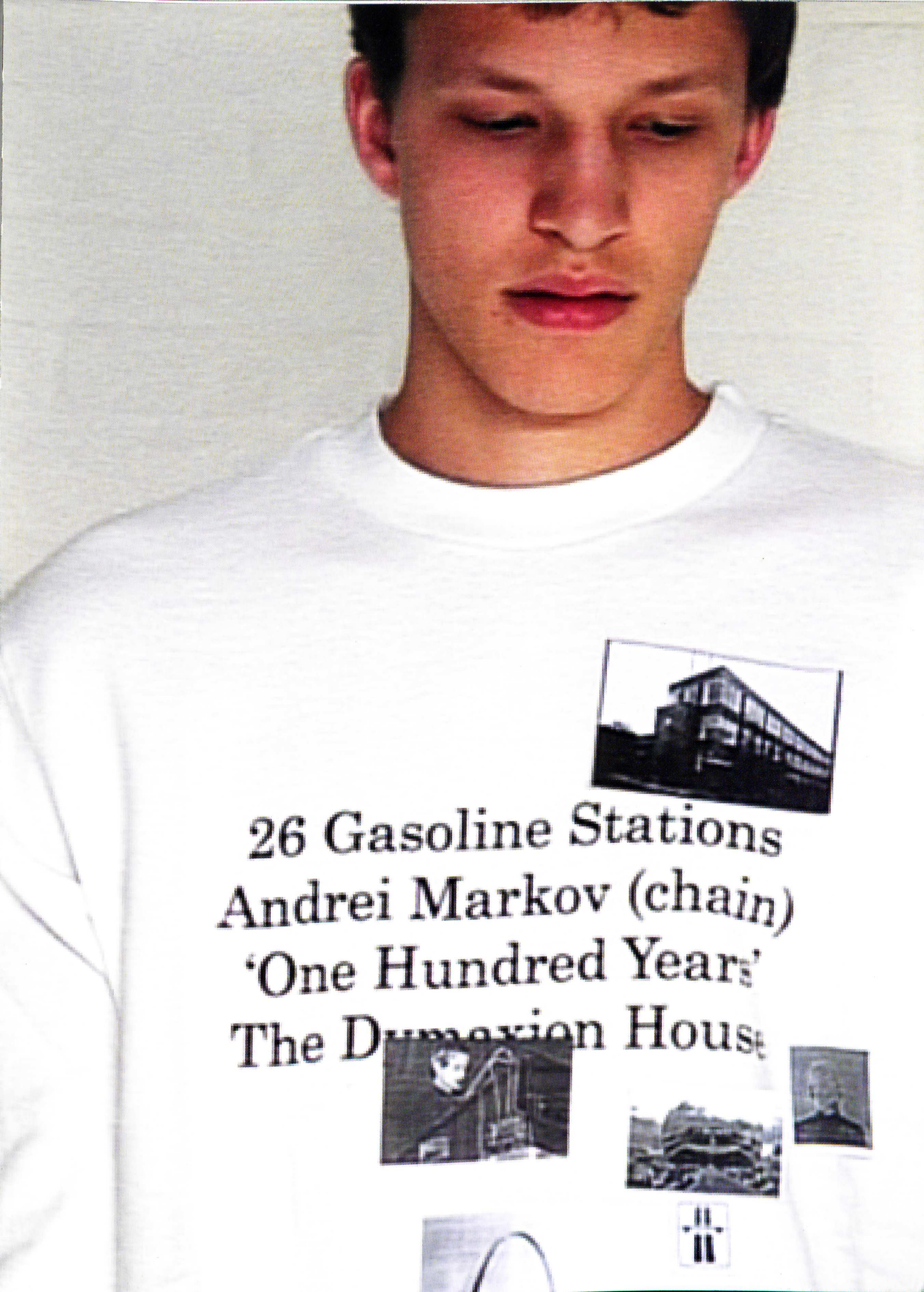
Spring–Summer 2002. Alexander. Photographed by Kurt De Wit. Grooming: Peter Philips. Paris, 2001.

5.

MACHINES

(THE REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION OF)


Alan Turing
'Neon Lights'
'Island of Never Anger'
Edgard Varèse


26 Gasoline Stations
Andrei Markov (chain)
'One Hundred Years'
The Dumaxion House

"History of the World", a poem by Peter De Potter. 2004. Six stanzas were selected by Raf Simons for prints Spring–Summer 2005.
(previous) Yorrick, Jano. By Peter De Potter (for video installation *Raf Simons Repeat*). Camera: Wouter Frans. Assistance: Sharon Keating. Antwerp, 2005.

26 Gasoline Stations
Andrei Markov (chain)
'One Hundred Years'
The Dymaxion House

Giordano Bruno
The Lightning Field
Mr. Sir
'A Short Term Effect'

Alan Turing (machine)
'Neon Lights' (1978)
'Island of Never Anger'
Edgard Varèse

Rachel Carson
Victory over the Sun
Taliesin West (1954)
Small White Pebble Circles

Carbonated Soft Drinks
Model N°670, 1956
Rosa Parks
Viking I, Viking II

Farnsworth House, Plano, Illinois
Supremus N°58
Nikola Tesla (coil)
'The Hanging Garden'

International Mobile
'Sparrowfall'
The Hall of Everlasting Life
Valentina Tereshkova

Richard Prince
Water Supply & Distribution
A Promise Ring
Puberty

Swimming Lakes
Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (jet)
St. Louis Gateway Arch
Drinking Straw

Red Petals
Niels Bohr (atoms for peace)
'Magnetic North'
Fallingwater

Remote Control
'Events In Dense Fog'
Ralf Hütter
Kilimanjaro (19,335.6)

Laughter And Forgetting
Carle David Runge (helium)
Sign Language
'Dunwich Beach, Autumn 1960'

‘Slowdive’
Robert Jarvik (7)
Grey-scale Ultrasound
Greeting Cards

Terrestrial Radar
Jonas Salk (strong children)
Monument To The Last Horse
Tin And Copper

The Texas Pieces
Louis, Mary & Richard Leakey (skull)
Ghost Telephone
Alpine Architecture

Rudolf Schwarzkogler
After Ford (Huxley)
Things That Are Near
Rouen Cathedral, Morning

White-haired Girls
Sojourner
M.L. (the freezing of mercury)
Floating Tetrahedral City

Monogram '55
JBJ Fourier (chaleur)
'Tiny Golden Books'
To Be Close

6.
FRICTION

STRAY SOULS, PRAY FOR US
HEAVY CLOUDS, DRAPE US
STRONG ELBOWS, SIGNAL US
GREY STEPS, DEFINE US
WAN STRANGERS, QUOTE US

IMMACULATE
HOPE IS SUPREME

Autumn–Winter 2001–2002. Andreas. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Make-up: Peter Philips. Paris, 2001.

Prints Spring–Summer 2002 by Peter De Potter with Robbie Snelders.
(next) Video stills Autumn–Winter 1996–1997, Spring–Summer 2002, Autumn–Winter 2002–2003, Spring–Summer 2004.

we are ready and willing to ignite,
JUST BORN TOO LATE
COMPANIONSHIP
everything belongs to us
because we are excited, insecure, apprehensive

STAND!
EVASION

#12 "FOREVER FOR NOW"
KOLLAPS

we are ready and willing to ignite,
JUST BORN TOO LATE
COMPANIONSHIP
everything belongs to us
because we are excited, insecure, apprehensive

STAND!
EVASION

WE ARE
READY
AND
WILLING
TO
IGNITE
JUST
BORN
TOO
LATE

Some day...
Some day...
Some day...

#12 "FOREVER FOR NOW
KOLLAPS

WE BELIEVE
WE REJECT
WE WERE TAUGHT TO ESCA
WE'LL TAKE
WE PLAN
WE SHALL
WE PLEDGE
WE BELIEVE
WE REJECT
WE ARE SEEKING
WE'LL TAKE
WE PLAN
WE SHALL
WE PLEDGE

4

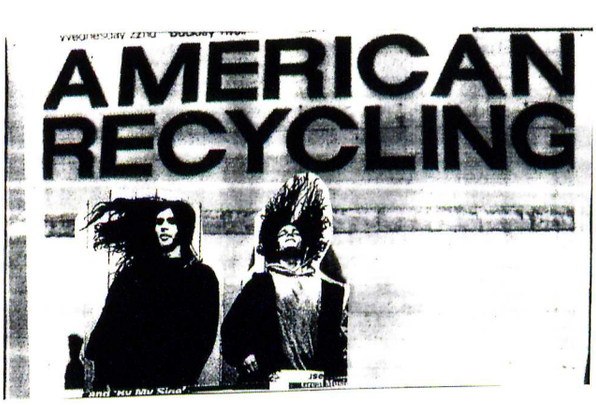
STAND AGAINST (be determined) // **REJOICE**

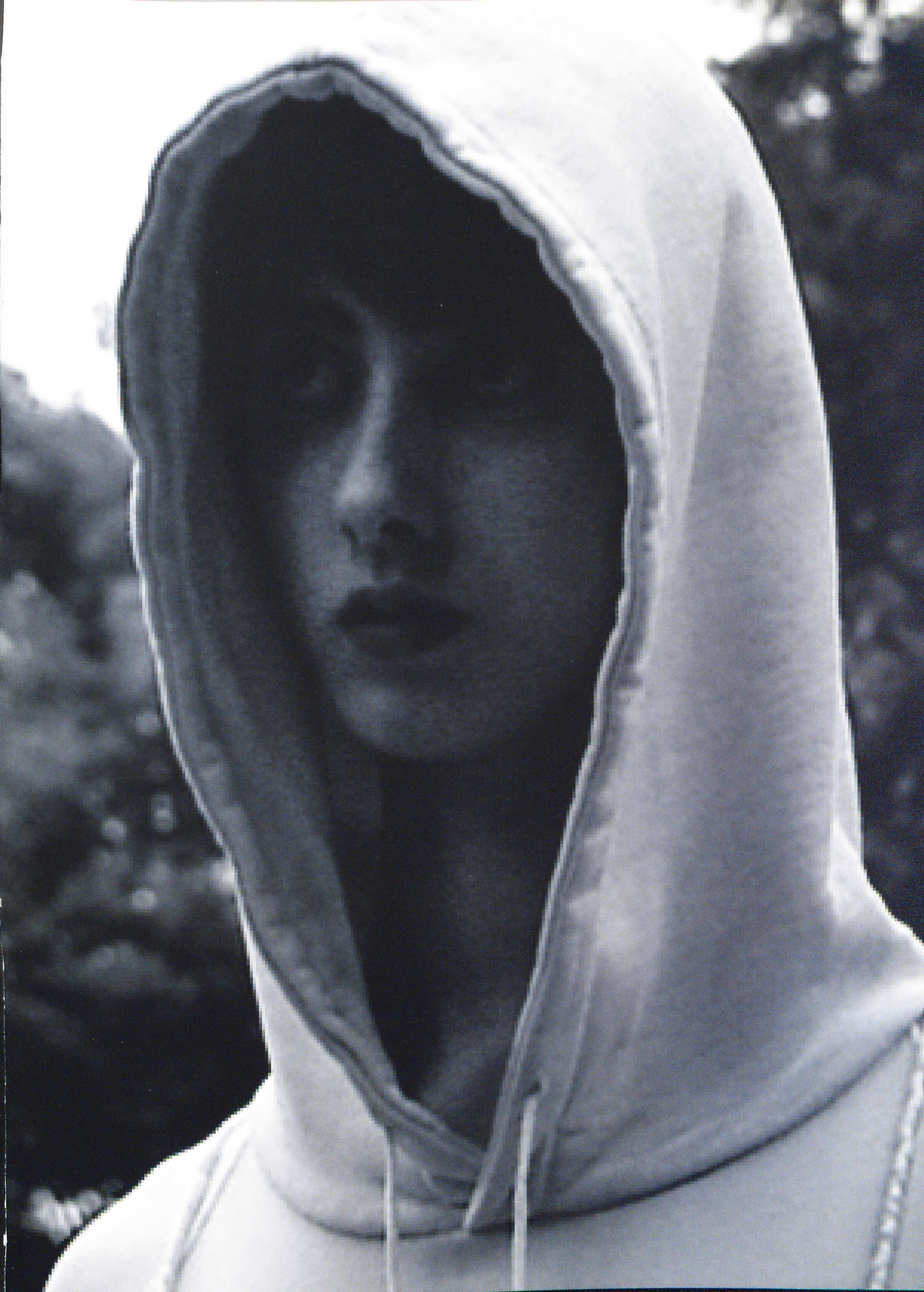
SO MANY GROUNDS TO COVER SO MANY CROWNS TO DISTRIBUTE

NOMINATE A SYMBOL, reflect in candles
silence and secrecy
NOMINATE A FLAG, release the expelled
, the morning awaits

A 1000 MILE LONG, 2 LIGHTYEARS DEEP
COULDN'T SACRIFICE, READ BACKWARDS
STRONG MOUNTAINS keep back **DRASTIC WINDS**
AS CALMLY AS POSSIBLE, AS CALMLY AS

POSSIBLE ...
DURABLE RESISTANCE
ICONIC WORSHIP
DEVOTED VIGILANCE
NATURE, NATURE, NATURE
SOME GREAT REWARD
CODE OF SILENCE



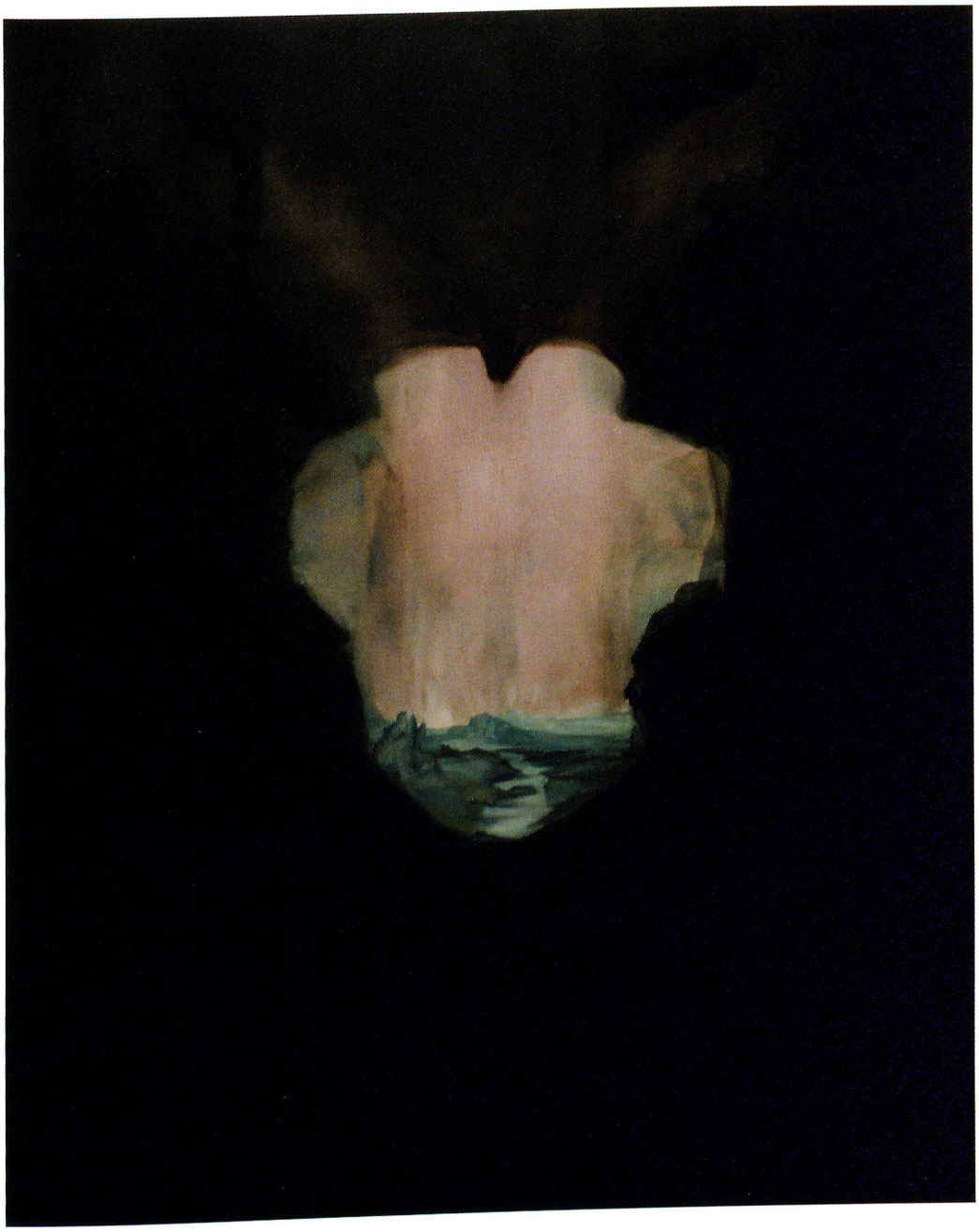


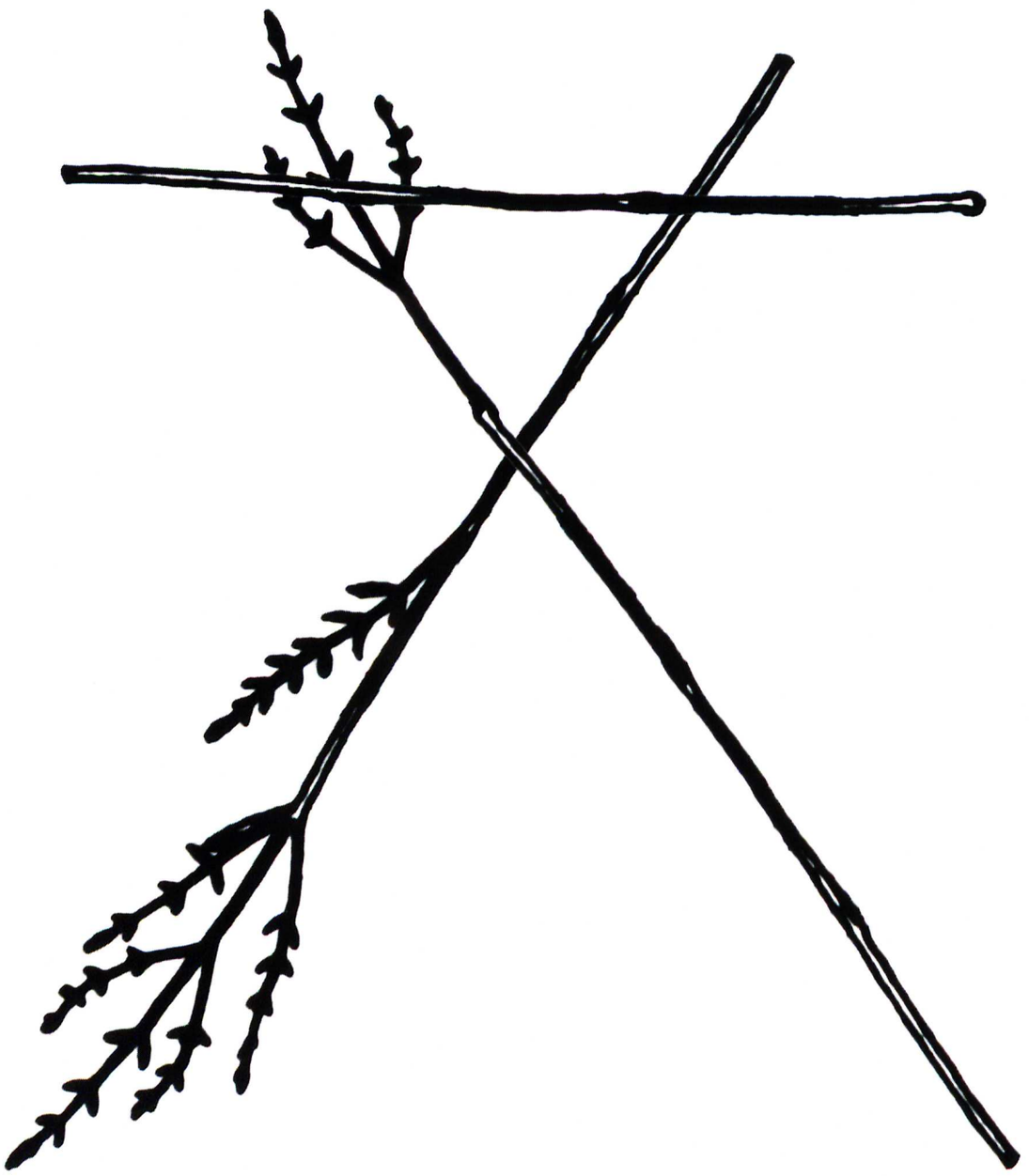
WOE ONTO THOSE WHO SPI
THE WIND WILL BLOW IT BA

T ON THE FEAR GENERATION
CK ...

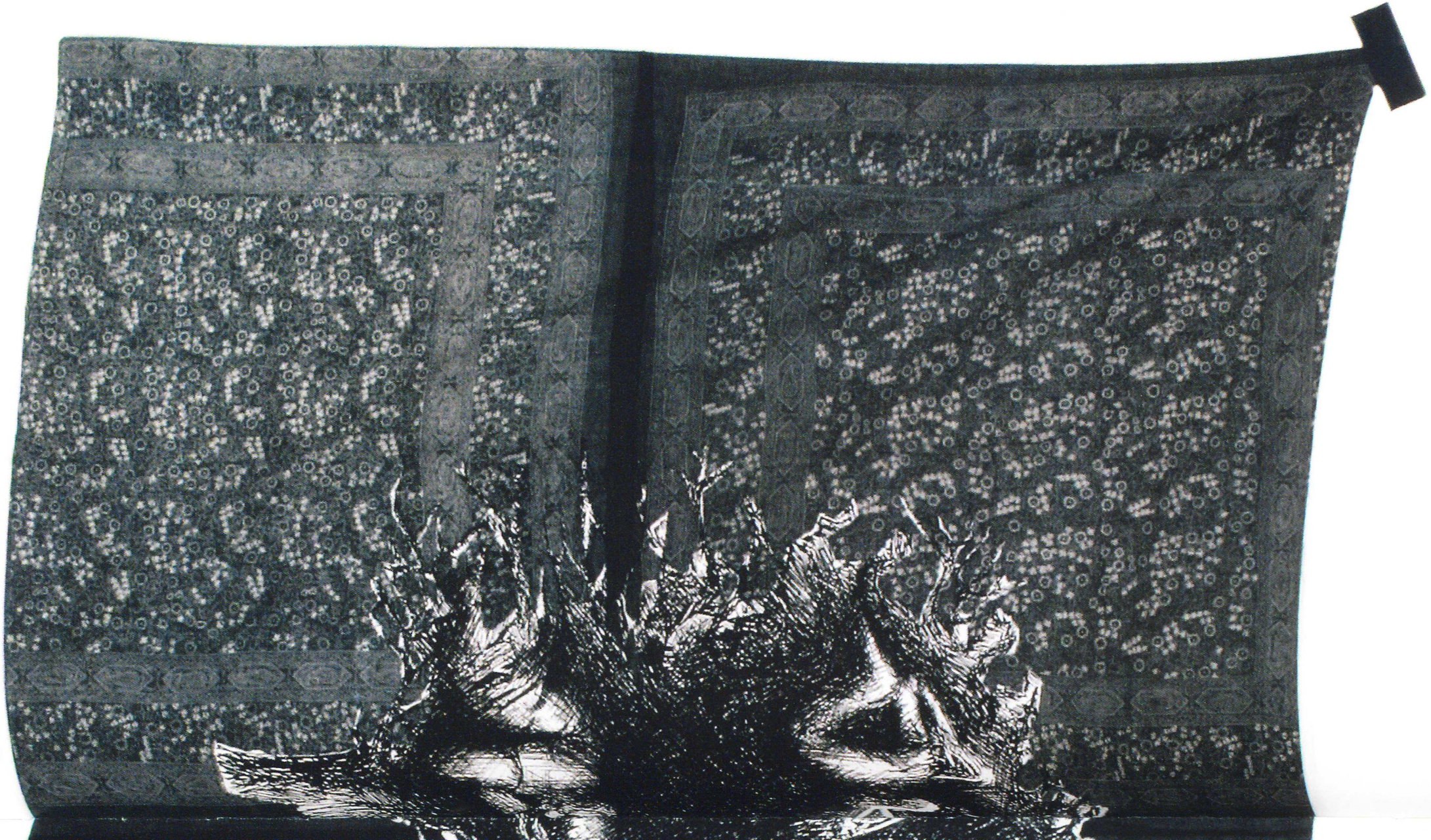
7.
NATURE
(MINDSCAPE)
(LANDSCAPE)

Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Stef Driesen, *Stereo*, 200 x 160 cm, oil on canvas, 2005. Antwerp, 2005.





Print Autumn–Winter 2002–2003 by Robbie Snelders with Peter De Potter.
Spring–Summer 2003. Can, executed by Atelier Elf. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.
(next) Spring–Summer 2004. Collaborative quilt by Raf Simons, Peter De Potter, Robbie Snelders, Pieter Mulier, Priska Morger, Tabassom Charaf, Stef Driesen, Antonietta Deluca, Diana Duong, Osamu Onuma. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.



TU QUOQUE, SIDDHARTHA !

TU QUOQUE, PSYCHOTIKKH

wanderer

WITH PSYCHOTIKKH WAND!

Skull candle (black), 2004. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.
Robbie, Raf, Priska, Vincent, Elke. Polaroid from the collection of Priska Morger.
(previous) Spring–Summer 2004. Video still.
(previous) *Ah!* by Peter De Potter. Carbonated paper. 2004.

Brian Calvin
Sinking, 2003
acrylic on canvas
12 x 9 in.
Collection: Michael and Sharon Young, Dallas
Courtesy Marc Foxx, Los Angeles

(next) Spring–Summer 2004. Collaborative quilt by Raf Simons, Peter De Potter, Robbie Snelders, Pieter Mulier, Priska Morger, Tabassom Charaf, Stef Driesen, Antonietta Deluca, Diana Duong, Osamu Onuma. Edition of 1, not for sale or production. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.

ON NATURE

Marc Foxx

Raf has a house near the sea.

I grew up on the beach in southern California, the beautiful beach, Hermosa Beach. The best waves, the best beach, the best scene, the best surf shops, the best pot. And the best style – everyone knew it. The beach became a part of me even though I knew I had to leave it to be able to come back.

Following a thrilling organic path that included education and substantial fashion, film and creative design components brought me to the world of art, and I eventually opened my own gallery in Los Angeles, not so far from the ocean.

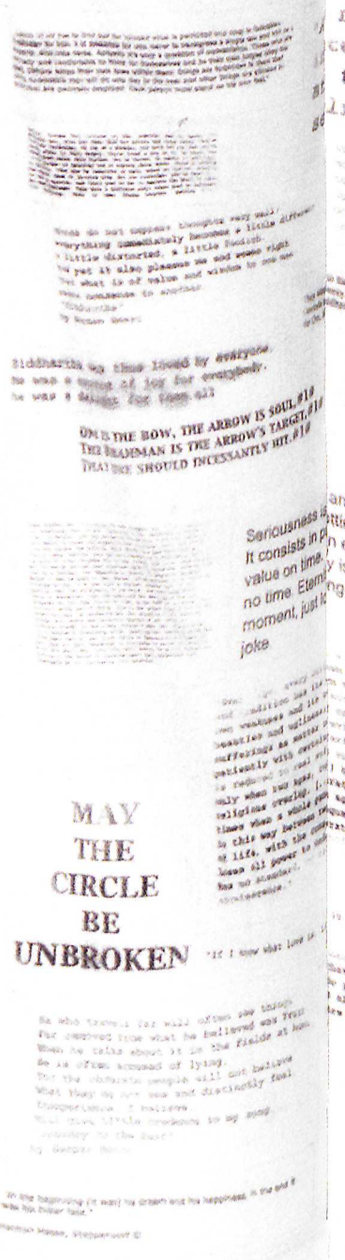
The world of art is a fantastic and strange "bedfellow" kind of place where I met Raf.

Still respectful and interested from my own time in the fashion world, I admired Raf's work from the very beginning and I wore his clothes. So I was thrilled when I discovered, only after speaking with him at length, that it was actually Raf Simons talking to me on the phone.

People come to the art world for many reasons. Raf does not look to this world for creative inspiration. Instead, his involvement is somehow wonderfully not associated with his own creative place. Yet both worlds are somehow the same, connected, like oceans and seas, where Raf and I spend time.

Any sense of personal style I may have that connects me to Raf in other ways comes directly from the ocean and the surf boy and girl gods I worshipped in my youth. The grace and insouciant sensuality of their carriage and stride was breathtaking. Imagine a young Bryan Ferry as a Polynesian prince. You can still see it in a good surf town. Of course all is owed to the awesomeness of the setting – the ocean – it is everything. It demands grace, grandeur and humbleness. It is amazing and beautiful to watch people walk on the beach. They walk with a sensuality and dignity seen nowhere else – grand and comfortable without exception. It is wonderful to see how Raf brings a sense of this, somehow, to his shows. There is a kind of natural grace that is felt by the audience through the experience Raf creates with his models and the ambience. Raf studied Industrial Design and this certainly influences the way in which he perceives the world. Raf's process with his models is an aspect of this, but I sense that it has more to do with his connection to the balance and rightness of things, just the way nature works and art sometimes shows. It is about how Raf's clothes work. Raf's clothes look the way they look because they work – like a conch shell to a conch, a wing to a bird, a peel to a banana – all very chic. Raf did not grow up by the sea, but they found one another.

RETU



Siddhartha was thus loved by everyone.
He was a source of joy for everybody.
He was a delight for them all

ON IS THE BOW, THE ARROW IS SOUL, #1
THE BRAHMAN IS THE ARROW'S TARGET, #1
THAT ONE SHOULD INCESSANTLY HIT. #1

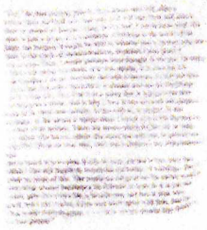
Seriousness
It consists in
value on time.
no time. Eter
moment, just

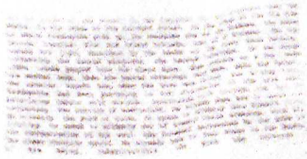
joke

MAY
THE
CIRCLE
BE
UNBROKEN

URNED

man cannot live
nsely except
the cost of the
f. "

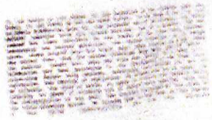




accident of time.
ng too high a
eternity there is
a a mere
enough for a

SIDDHARTHA

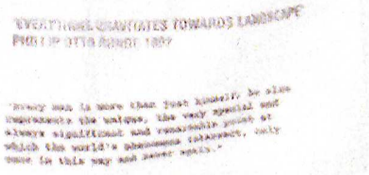
"There is no reality
except the one contained
within us. That is why so
many people live such an
unreal life. They take
images outside them
for reality and never
allow the world within to
unfold itself."



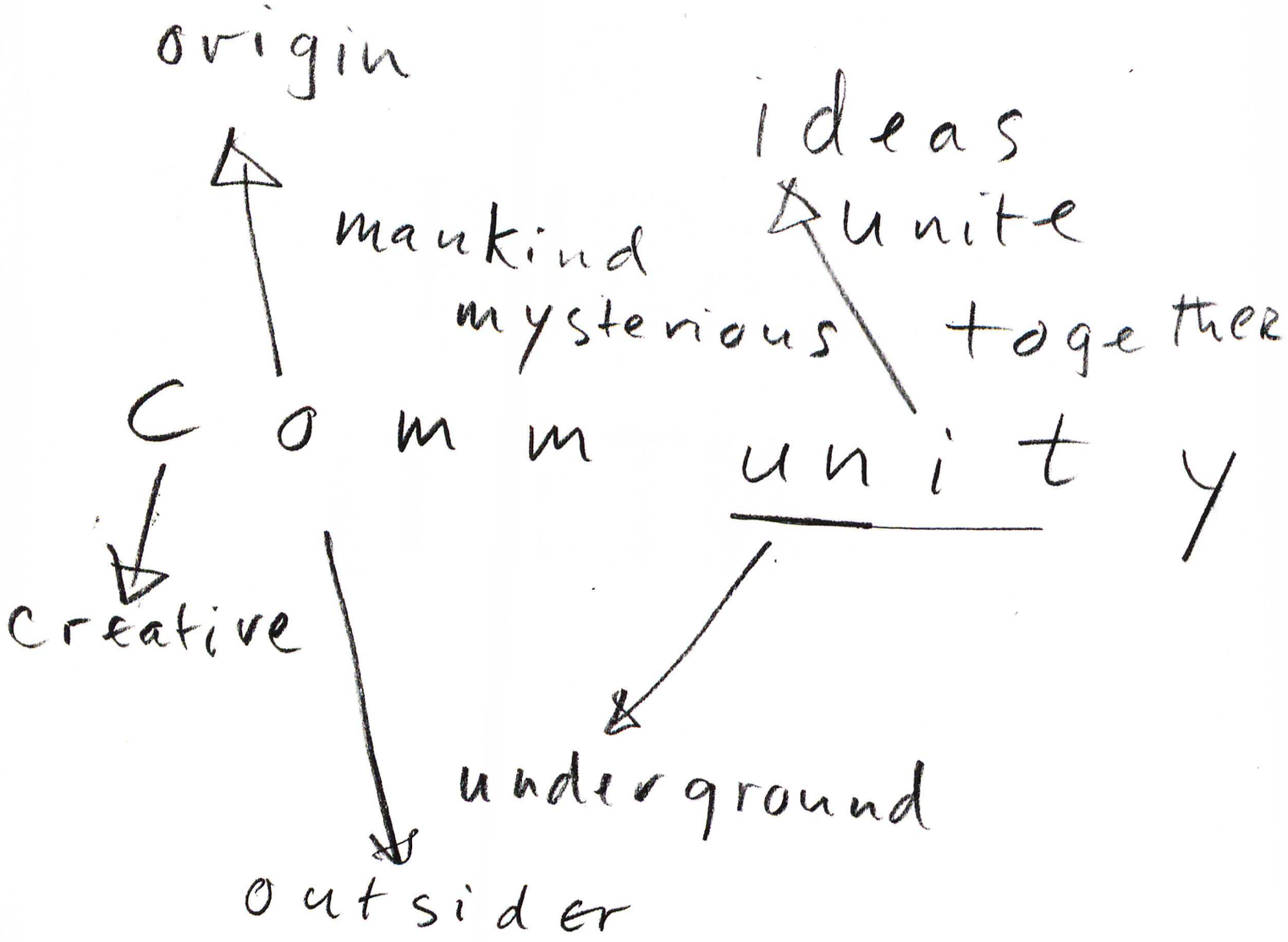
WRITTEN ON AN APRIL NIGHT 1962

chapter 1

HESSE



8.
COMMUNITY (ENTER)



Drawing by Terry Jones. London, 2005.

UNIT ONE 05/05

Terry Jones

In a business that can be fickle by nature and where friendships can be a façade, I particularly value the respectful relationship Tricia and I have established with Raf Simons over the years since we first met. I had been asked to select the avant-garde of fashion to be part of a fashion biennial in Florence in 1997, and I wanted Raf to be involved. We met Raf at his showroom in Paris and I was immediately impressed by his, and his team's, sincere dedication.

Over the following months, I learned about his uncompromising vision. Raf would only participate in the exhibition if three of his teenage boys could model for the duration of the installation. That meant living in the Stazione Leopolda in a facsimile of his all-white Antwerp studio apartment for weeks. Visitors to the show could see the boys watch TV, listen to music, sleep or make themselves a meal in the kitchen. Over the years, I have watched Raf's evolution and I have been to all of his menswear presentations. When he said he wanted to stop for one season, I asked if he would guest edit an issue of *i-D*. *i-D* has become an extended family, and the family-like atmosphere is particularly strong because Tricia has always paid careful attention to the friendships and relationships that make *i-D* special. It is hard to define what makes a friendship. With Raf, it definitely has to do with a feeling that might be connected to our subconscious. Somewhere in our DNA, there is a connection beyond nationality that has to do with humanity. As individuals, we may be outsiders and look to each other for emotional and spiritual support. Raf's collections tap into a collective consciousness that involves collective memories of images and sounds. The combined strength is not militant but constantly questions today's social conditioning.

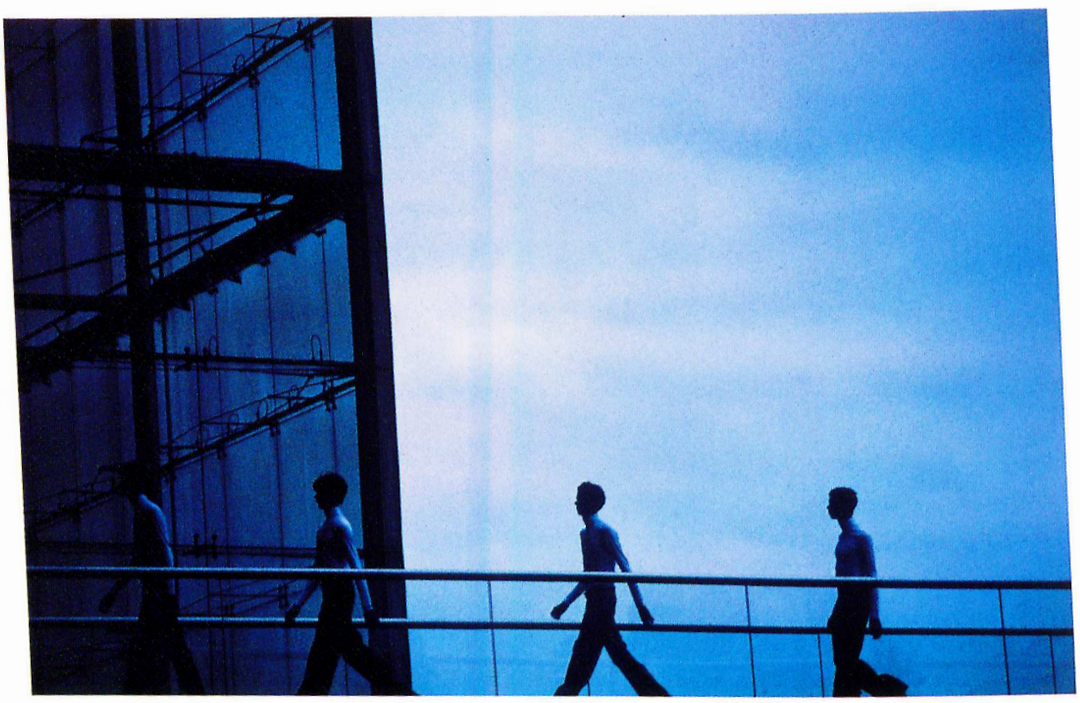
The individual within the group, the responsibility of leadership within the community. The isolation of the outsider. The nature of humanity within the pressure for survival of personal identity. These issues are a few that are raised during any presentation of Raf's collections. Fashion is the medium that he uses to remix the rules. A self-taught fashion designer, Raf is an observer of human behaviour.

He has a strong vision that together with his team's support infiltrates the international community. In a recent interview for *i-D*, I asked Raf if things have changed since he started. He said, "Confusion. Confusion all around. I see the confusion, I feel the confusion. People don't know. And I'm totally attracted to these periods, I like them. The twenty-first century starts now, not five years ago."

Spring–Summer 1999. Photo: Christopher Moore.

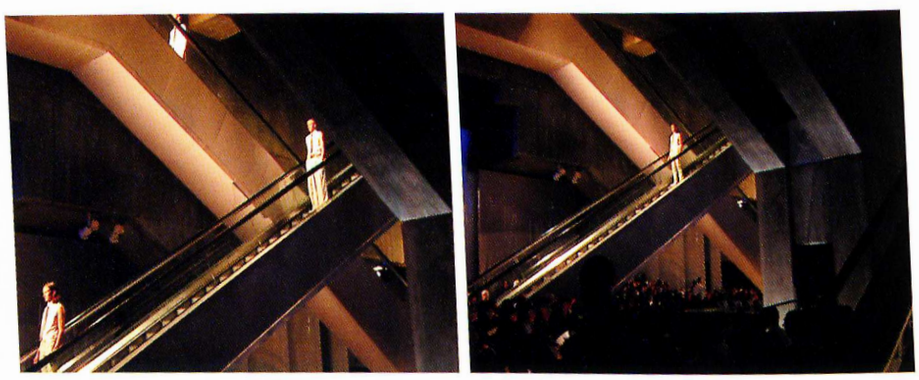
Spring–Summer 2000. Photo: Etienne Tordoir.

Spring–Summer 2000. Video still.



Spring–Summer 1999. Photo: Bert Houbrechts.

Autumn–Winter 1998–1999. Photo: Bert Houbrechts.

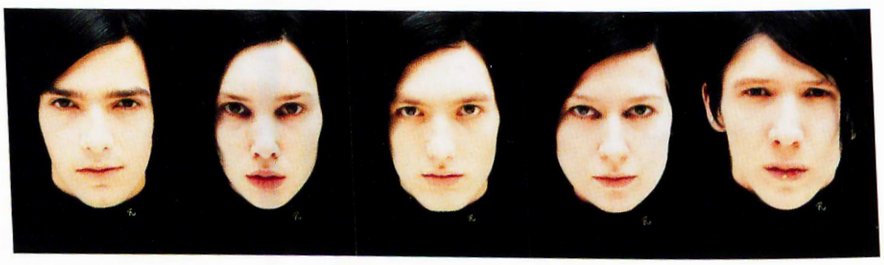


Spring–Summer 2005. Video stills.

Spring–Summer 2004. Photo: Priska Morger.

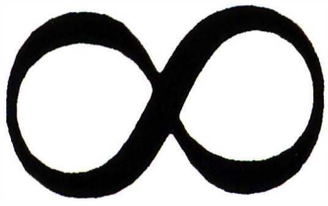
Spring–Summer 1998. Photo: Yoko Takahashi (Polaroid outtake). For Men's Nono, 1997.

Autumn–Winter 1999–2000. Photo: Marleen Daniels.



Mike, Veronique, Jeff, Pascale, Camille. Photographed by Ronald Stoops. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Antwerp, 1996.

COMMUNITY



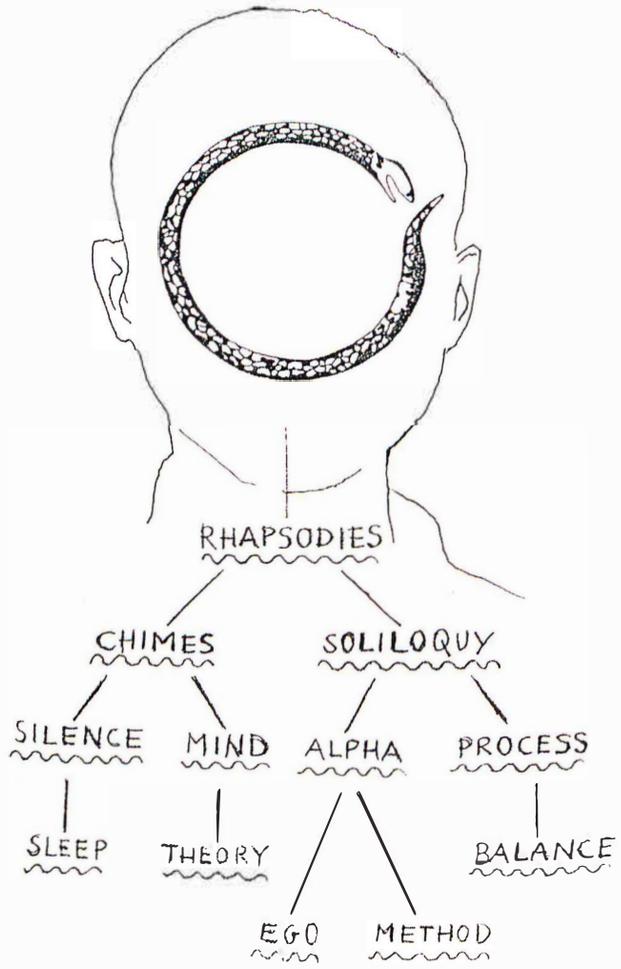
Anton Alloing
Stijn Anseels
Seppe Baeyens
Ibou Ballissaq

Kevin Bastiaensen
Sander Beckers
Ben Berckmoes
Tim Blancke

Johan Bocklandt
Gino Brepoels
Werner Busschots
Jan Busselen

Steven Cassiers
Michael Castermans
Alain Cauwenbergh
Steve Cauwenbergh

Kevin Claeyssens
Christina Coene
Cedric Corhouts
Hannes Coudenys



Jelle Debusscher
Bastiaan De Caluwé
Niko Deceuckeleire
Tirna De Craene

Robin De Flô
Stijn De Geest
Frederic De Gucht
Jean-Jacques De Gucht

Evert De Kort
Jano De Leeuw
Yorrick De Leeuw
Robin De Man

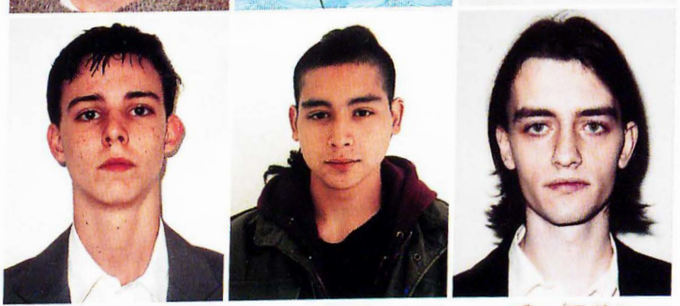
Photo: Boy Kortekaas

Benjamin De Moor
Gert De Mot
Elias Derboven

Jelena De Roeck
Nicolas Deslé
Maarten Desmet

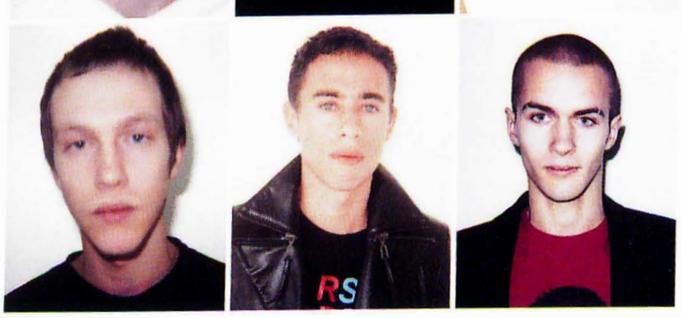
Christophe Dierckx
Gwen Donkers
David Flamée

Ludovico Radice Fossati
Glenn Geerinck
Wolfram Ghesquière



Christophe Gonzales
Felix Gutierrez
Hidde Haazen

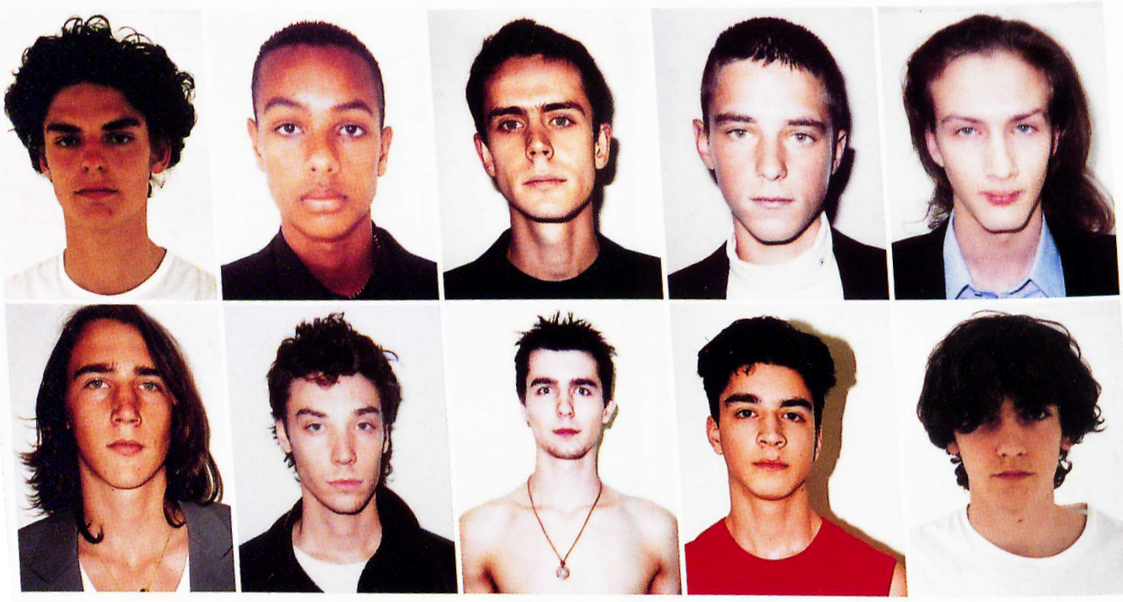
Wim Haelewaeters
Benjamin Hartman
Dax Hendrix



Cis Heylen
Gregory Hockx
Steven Hubrecht

VIRGINIA CREEPER

PARTHENOCISSUS QUINQUEFOLIA



Nicolas Isenborghs
Melvin Jansen
Dirk Janssen
Dieter Janssens
Johan Janssens

Jonas Jonckheere
Vincent Joosten
David Jordens
Michael Karkousse
Diego Keirsebilck

Photo: Ronald Stoops

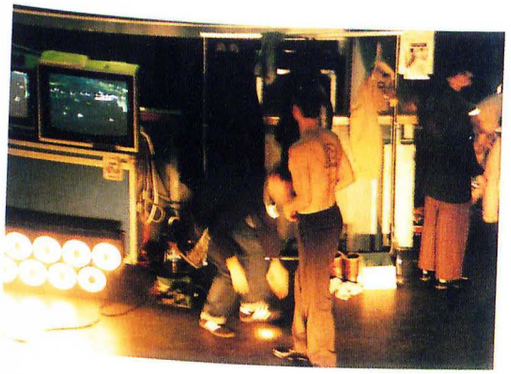


Photo: Ronald Stoops

Photo: Ronald Stoops

Photo: Boy Kortekaas

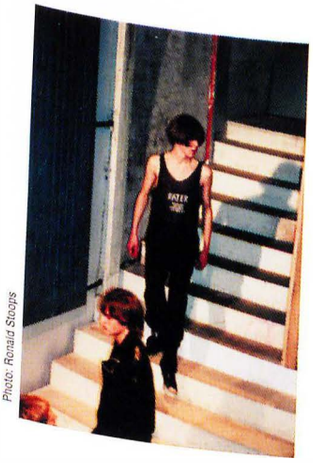


Photo: Ronald Stoops

CHRISTIAN

Ronald Kenens
Boy Kortekaas
Christophe Lemmens
Yannick Lepère
Tom Leroy

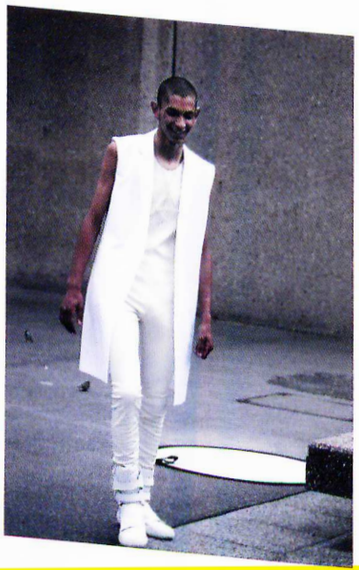


Photo: Boy Kortekaas

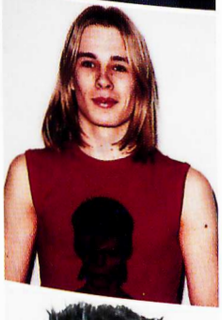
Pieter Leunens
Jilmen Lombaerts
Baïdy Ly
Karel Lyssens

Photo: Priska Morger

ELKE

Andreas Mampaey
Wouter Mathijs
Christophe Meeusen
Anai Michelen

Photo: Ronald Stoops



Jourik Migom
Jonathan Moreau
Manu Moreau
Jochen Nikolajscak

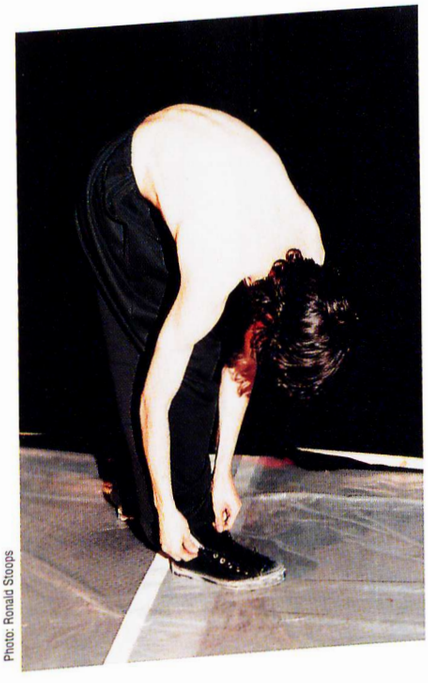
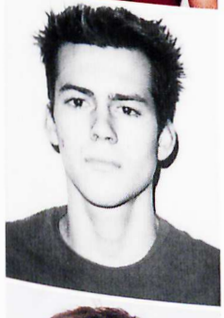


Photo: Ronald Stoops



Sifiso Nkayi
Christophe Olsen
Lieven Peeters
Vincent Peeters

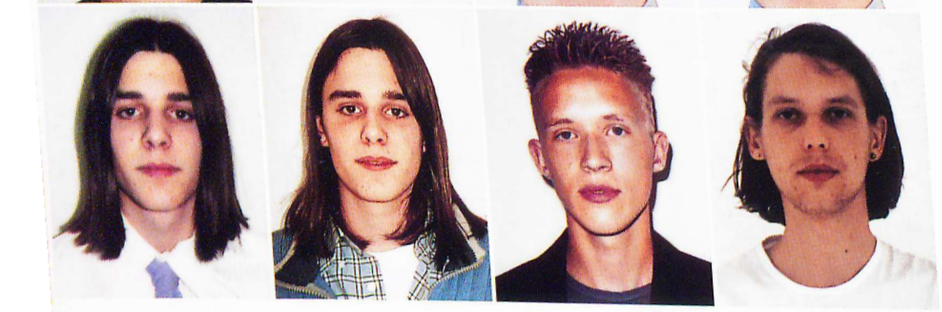
Cesar Raes
Joris Raets
Brian Raeymakers
Jeroen Rat

SOPHIE

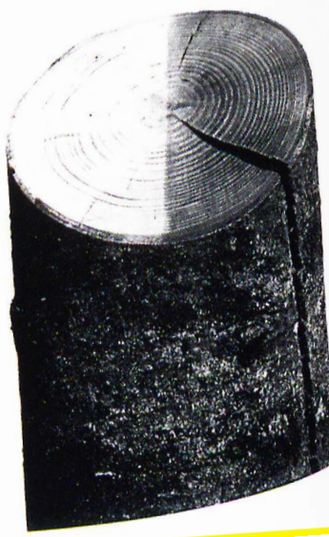
Photo: Raf Coolen

Michel Rinaldi
Dieter Roelstraete
Maya Roest
Bart Ruckaert

Ken Saen
Steven Saen
Kim Sarens
Stevie Sarens



Jens Schelkens
Niels Schelkens
Jan-Bart Schiltz
Serge Schoffelen



VINCENT

Photo: Bert Houbrechts

Photo: Boy Kortekaas

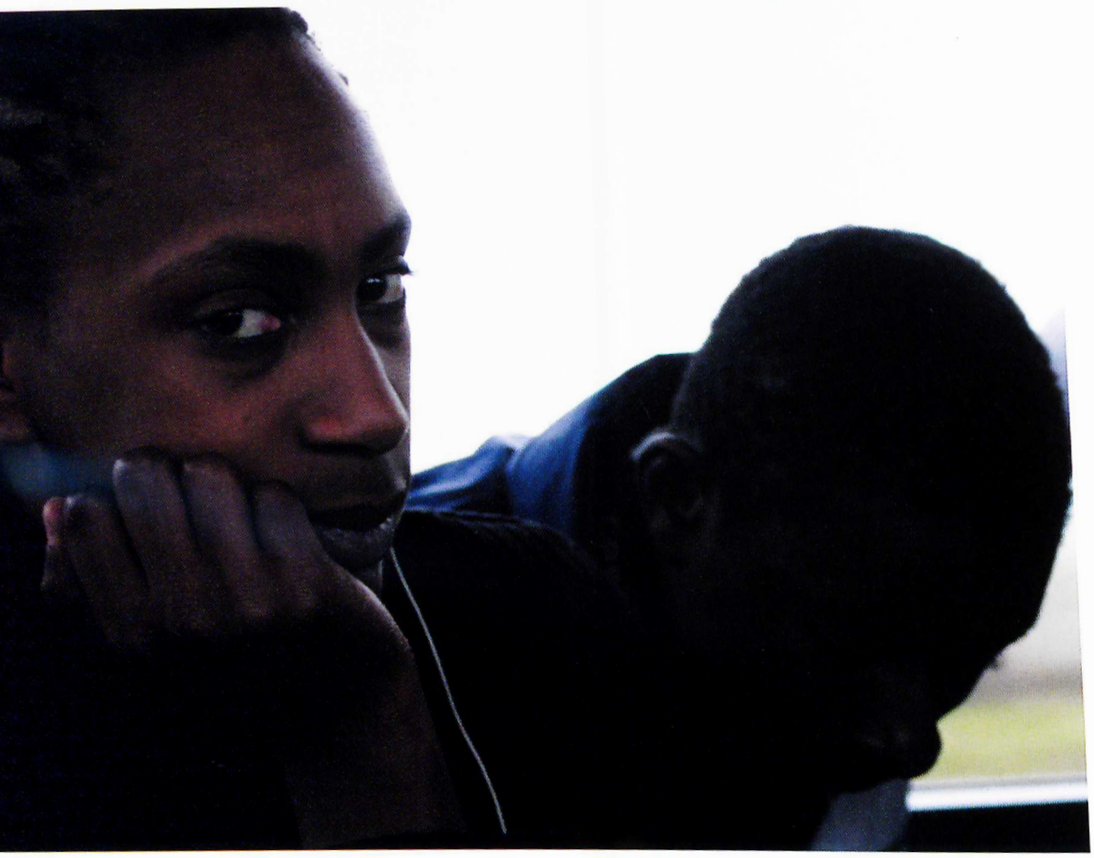
Olaf

Photo: Boy Kortekaas

PRISKA

Lise Schotte
Thomas Segers
Diederik Serlet
Jelle Smedts
Robbie Snelders

Jonathan Smits
Julio Spencer
Joachim Spiessens
Pieter Staes
Bram Stassyns



Elisa
Bram
Mike
Veronique

Nick Oberthaler

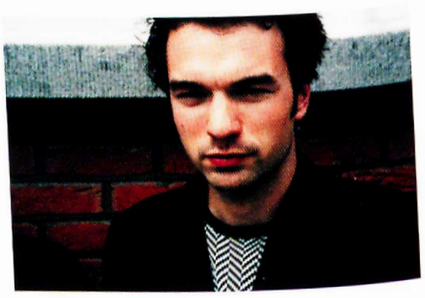


Photo: Raf Coolen

Photo: Ronald Stoops

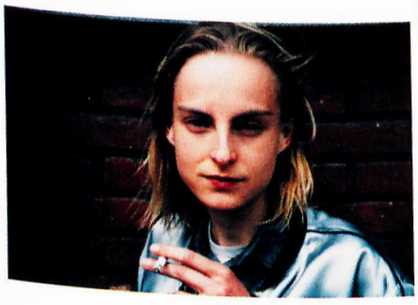
DAVID ROBBIE

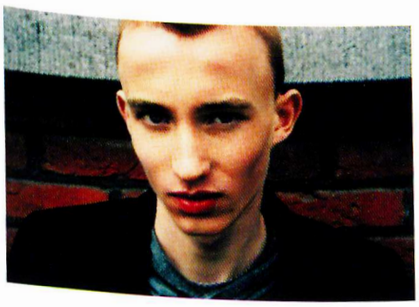
Photo: Bert Houbrechts

Gie Stremersch
Wesley Swolfs
Tim Tant
Anthony Tavernier

Omar Thiam
Michael Thys
Oliver Tinkl

Sophie
Basile
Jeff
Staf





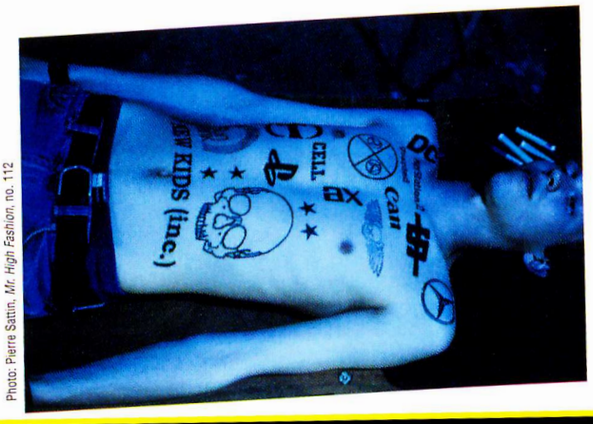
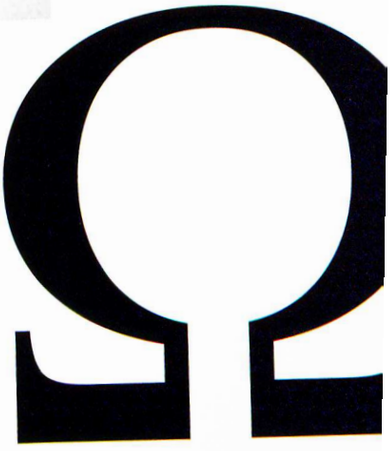


Photo: Pierre Sattin, *Mr. High Fashion*, no. 112



Jeffrey

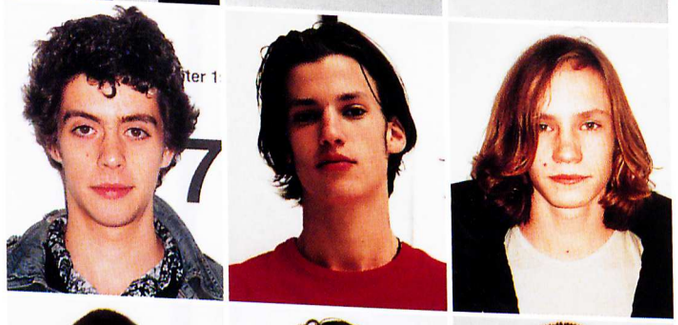
Florian Tomballe
Daouda Traore
Elie Tshisung

Alexander Vaerewijck
Erik Valenteyn
Gorik Van Assche

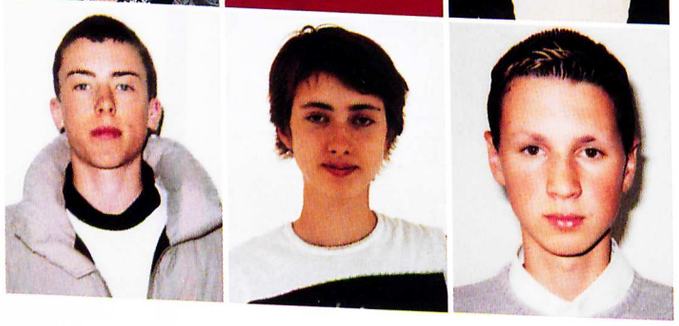
Bart Van Buitenen
Christophe Van De Wal
Philippe Van Den Ameele

Simon Van Den Branden
Peter Vanderheyden
Quinten Vandermeersch

Tuur Van Elzen
Jorik Van Esch
Ravian Van Esch



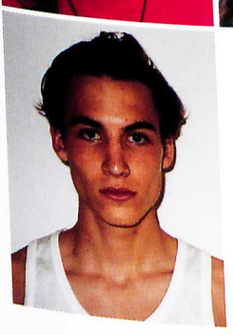
Jan-Jan Van Essche
Maarten Van Essche
Ken Van Ganzen



Seppe Van Grieken
Nele Van Haegenberg
Tom Van Keer

Joppe Van Meervelde
Yannick Van Melis
Ward Van Moeseke

Bert Van Tichelen
Koen Van Tichelen
David Van Turhout



Benoît Verbeeck

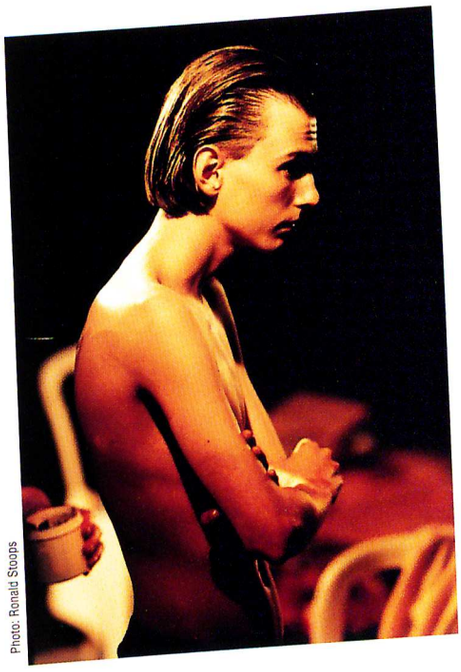


Photo: Ronald Stoops

Photo: Ronald Stoops

Photo: Priska Morger

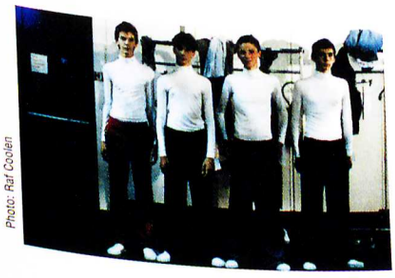


Photo: Raf Coolen

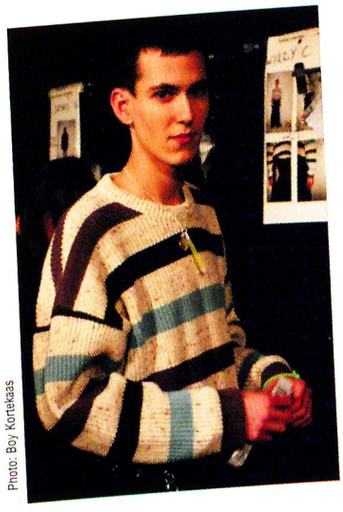


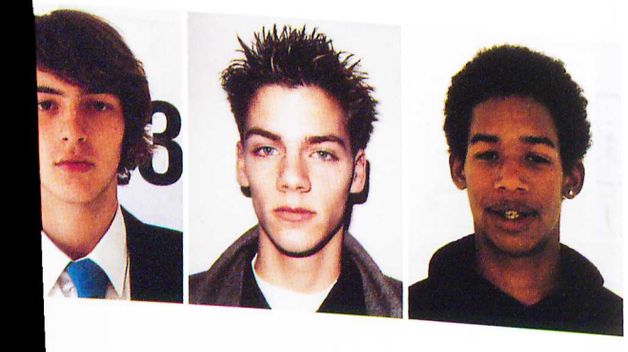
Photo: Boy Kortekaas

Willy Cuylits

Frank Verbeke
Erwin Verbruggen
Rudi Vercauteren
Michael Verheyden
Dennis Verhulst

Steven Vermessen
Tim Versweyver
Hans Vervloesem
Thomas Vervecken
Vincent Vlerick

Photo: Ronald Stoops



PIETER

Zeno Wendelen
Laurent Wenner
Jonas Weyn

EXILES EVERYWHERE WE GO

Photo: Boy Kortekaas

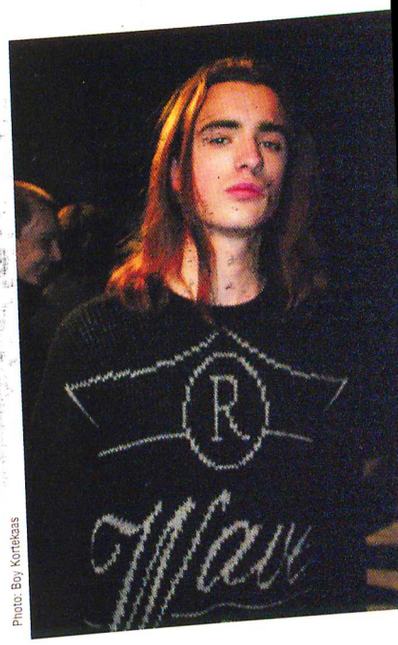


Photo: Boy Kortekaas

Staf Van Lierde

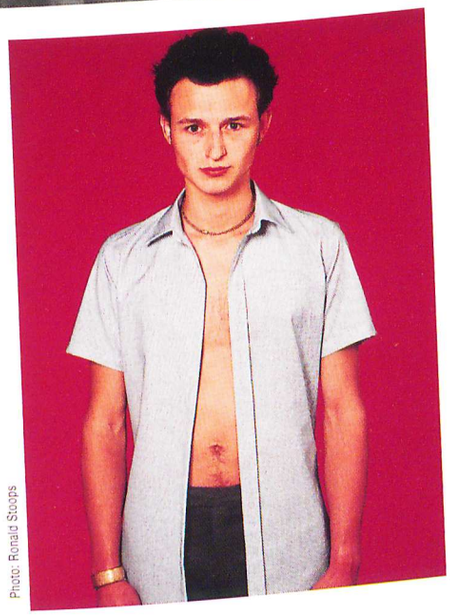


Photo: Ronald Stoops

Nico Foubert

Photo: Raf Coolen

9.
FUTURE
-
THIS IS OUR CHORUS

THIS IS TOMORROW

Jo-Ann Furniss

In the future, all music around the earth will be by Crazy Frog. Even extended remixes will last no longer than thirty seconds. All of Crazy Frog's music will be based on songs, symphonies and sounds that have gone before. The complete history of the world's music will be assimilated and reinterpreted by Crazy Frog (with a video clip to match) and transmitted via the medium of the mobile telephone.

This worst-case scenario is a vision of the future devoid of any diversity of culture, of any gradations (all culture will be pop – and crap pop at that – a "Rola-Cola" culture, if you will). In this future of non-commitment and non-belief, of non-structure and non-ideology, "Rola-Cola" culture is a reflection of that – an all-consuming, repetitive, imitative Crazy Frog.

But we have not quite reached this sorry state of affairs just yet. We might at least remain in a "Coca-Cola" culture for now, where pop still retains some vestiges of being "the real thing". And there are still a few participants in pop culture who are prepared to believe in it, comment from within it and use it in a sophisticated way. Of course, Raf Simons is one of them.

From the beginning of Raf Simons' career in fashion design in 1995, there has always been a fusion of past, present and future pop. Sometimes literally, shown in his debt to pop music and how it influenced his clothing, both in look – the A/W 98–99 presentation Radioactivity, with its nod to Kraftwerk is perhaps the most obvious example – but also, and most importantly for Simons, in "atmosphere". This is the weird, emotional charge that Raf Simons often instils in his clothing and presentations; the same kind of power as hearing an old familiar song played after a long lapse of time.

The thing is, Simons has always been aware that the presentation of this distilled vision of the past is always taking place in the present. His collections have often displayed a recognition of youth cultures slipping away, but there is also a transfiguration of these as opposed to a mere nostalgic repetition of their surface styles. Most importantly, there is often an indefinable element (the designer often talks of an "Interzone"), a feeling that you are witnessing something that is to come – a strange, futuristic, alien, male world.

As Simons' career as a designer has progressed, it is this latter element that has clearly become the definable *raison d'être*. To change the very perception of men and to define how they might be is a grandiose scheme, to say the least. It takes commitment and belief on the part of the designer to the medium of fashion.

While much has been made of the fusing of fashion and visual art over the past decade, this notion, to all intents and purposes, has been a wild goose chase. Any designer worth his salt has been reluctant to take onboard the idea that he is suddenly an "artist" along with all the baggage that entails. Raf Simons is no exception; he knows it would make him an irrelevance. It is not fashion's fault if much visual art looks shallow and facile and insists on borrowing a certain "fur coat, no knickers" language of fashion. In many ways, visual art no longer really comments on pop culture and consumerism – it just *is* pop culture and consumerism. On the other hand, very few designers have actually tried to be "art". I would also argue that very few have tried to take onboard and apply the supposed "higher intellectual purpose" of art. Who cares? But what has become very clear over the last decade is that fashion can have a purpose and a serious power to comment all of its own from within pop culture. Fashion, at its best, believes in the

Spring–Summer 2005. Photographed by Boy Kortekaas. Paris, 2004.

transformative power of pop and can be both elitist and democratic at the same time. While fashion might appear to be the datum of post-modernity, it also perpetuates the logic of modernism with its investment in "the new". In short, fashion still believes in progress and the future.

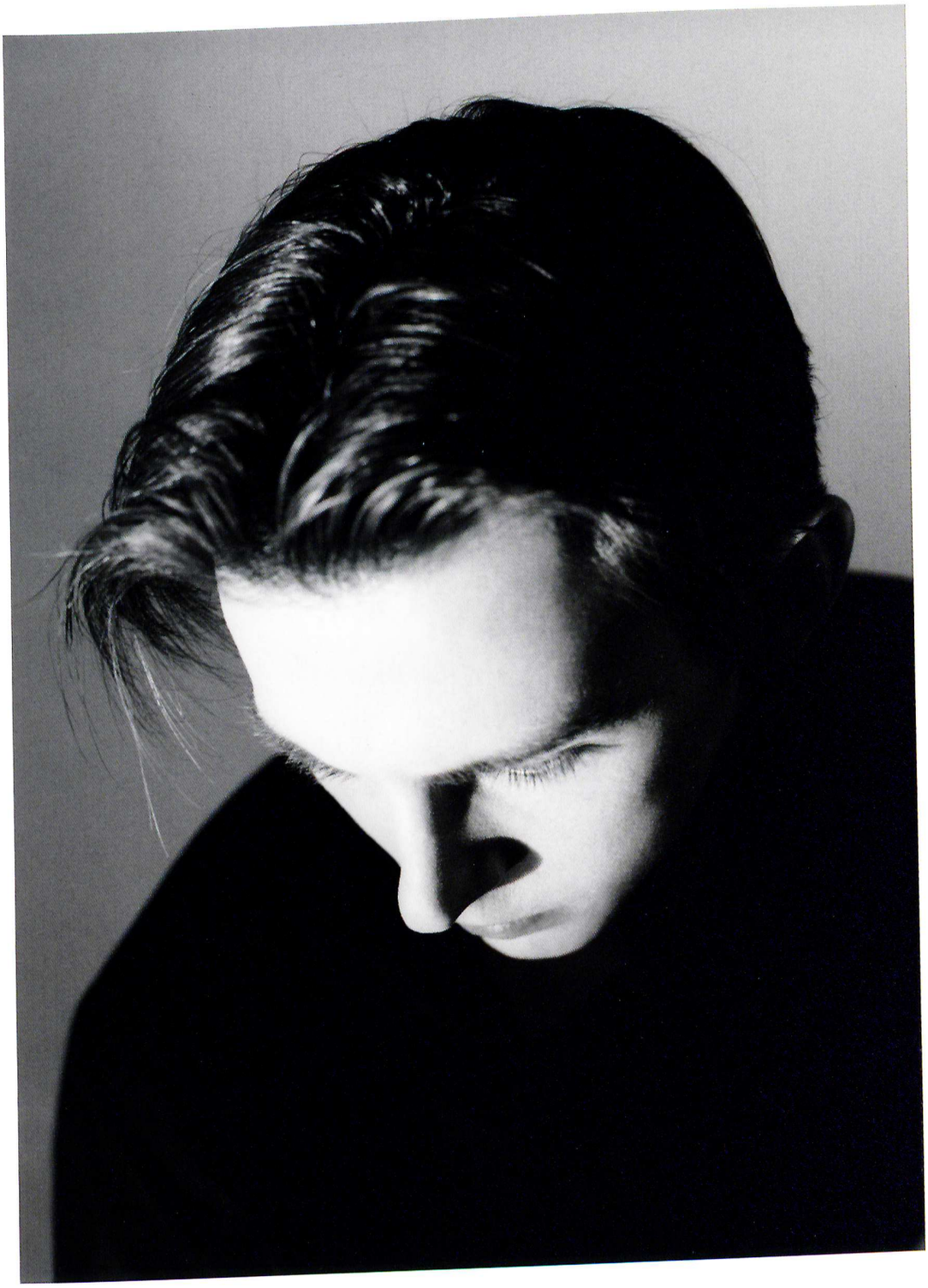
Of course, this is no mean feat these days and not all fashion – in terms of design, styling or photography – displays anything as grand as a "neo-modernist" agenda, but it can be argued that Raf Simons' recent work does. In the designer's "post-break" period (post-2000 when Simons suspended his company), there has been something different at work in his design process. The emphasis has slowly but surely tipped from a reliance on the past – particularly his own past – as a starting point to make something new, to a concentrated focus on and imagining of the future, away from a dwelling on himself.

From the beginning of this new period, with his two "comeback" collections of A/W 01–02 and S/S 02, there was a greater sense of interpreting and anticipating the times. Each was about protection and protest and, particularly in the case of S/S 02's Woe onto those who spit on the fear generation … the wind will blow it back collection, there was a conspicuous debt to an Arab way of dressing with long flowing layers and face covering scarves. This collection was shown in Paris in July 2001. Sometimes, fashion designers display an uncanny ability to be just ahead of what is to come, and after September 2001, Simons was interviewed many times about these collections. Unlike many in the fashion industry who were anxious to de-politicise statements made in their work after September 11, Simons took onboard the repercussions of such referencing and imagery, whose source material was by now plastered all over pop culture. Why couldn't fashion comment from its position as a mass cultural phenomenon? Especially when Islamic extremism criticises Western "style" as much as its "substance" and particularly when such statements were made before the event.

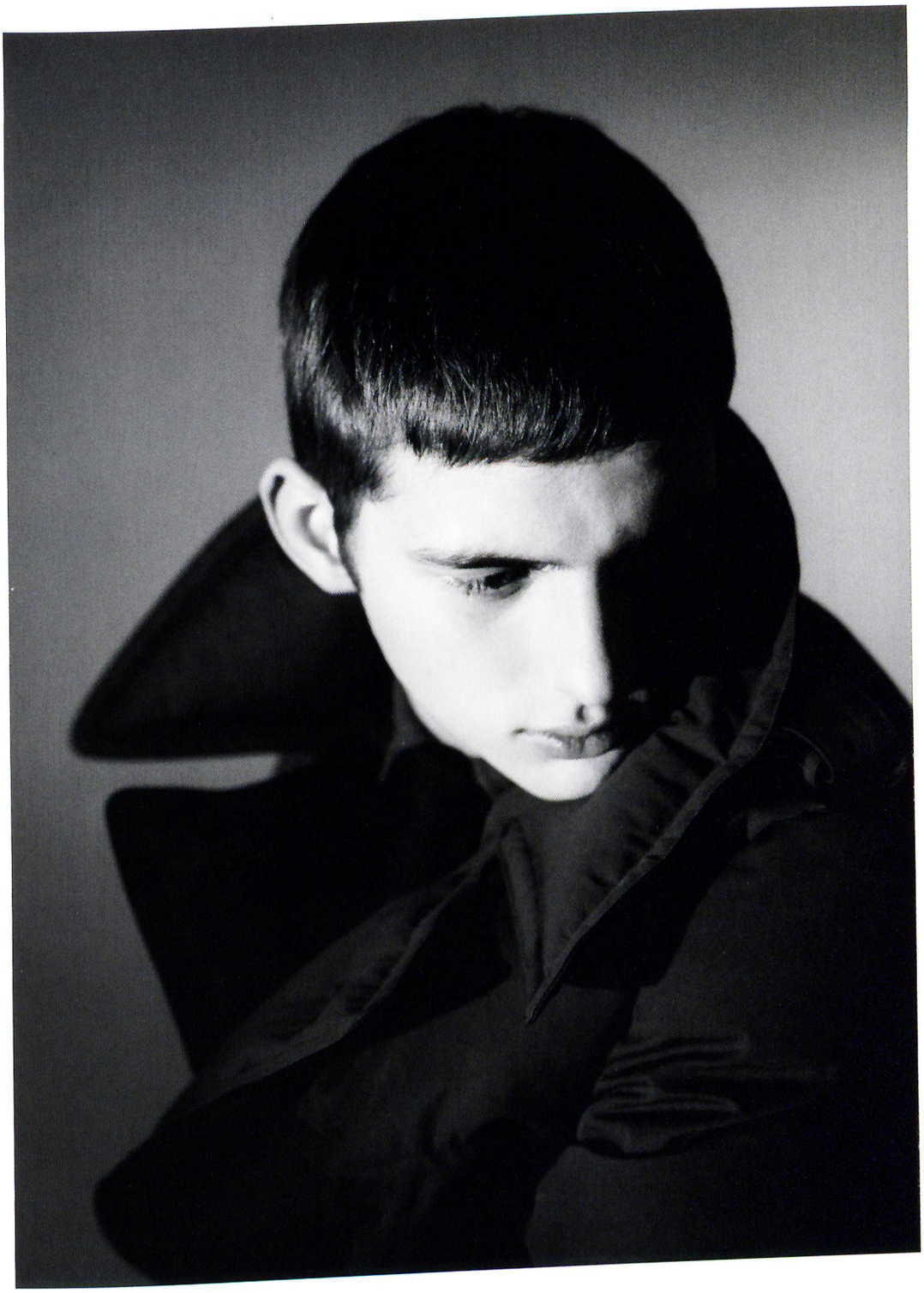
More recently, Simons' collections have entered into an entirely new phase. The key turning point was A/W 04–05, when the obsessive youth culture codes of his past were turned into clothes that were purely about shape and form. This collection was the definitive end of one cycle and the heralding of another. With S/S 05, this new cycle revealed itself to be about the long-term future and the anticipation of a new era; the A/W 05–06 collection is its continuation. Optimism permeates these collections; it is an optimism grounded in the idea that there might just be a chance to do something entirely new again. These collections are also a glimpse of fashion once again free from the baggage of history that has so burdened it in recent years.

From the beginning of his career in 1995, Simons has found himself moving away from memory and towards more abstract ideas. For the designer, 2005 is now a year that is as much about a future utopia – say 2015 – as it is about today. Then again, maybe his two collections for 2005 are as much about the impossibility of imagining the future today as they are about achieving it. Commitment, belief, ideology and structure are some of the crazy key words for these collections. It is only to be hoped that pop culture in the future can live up to them.

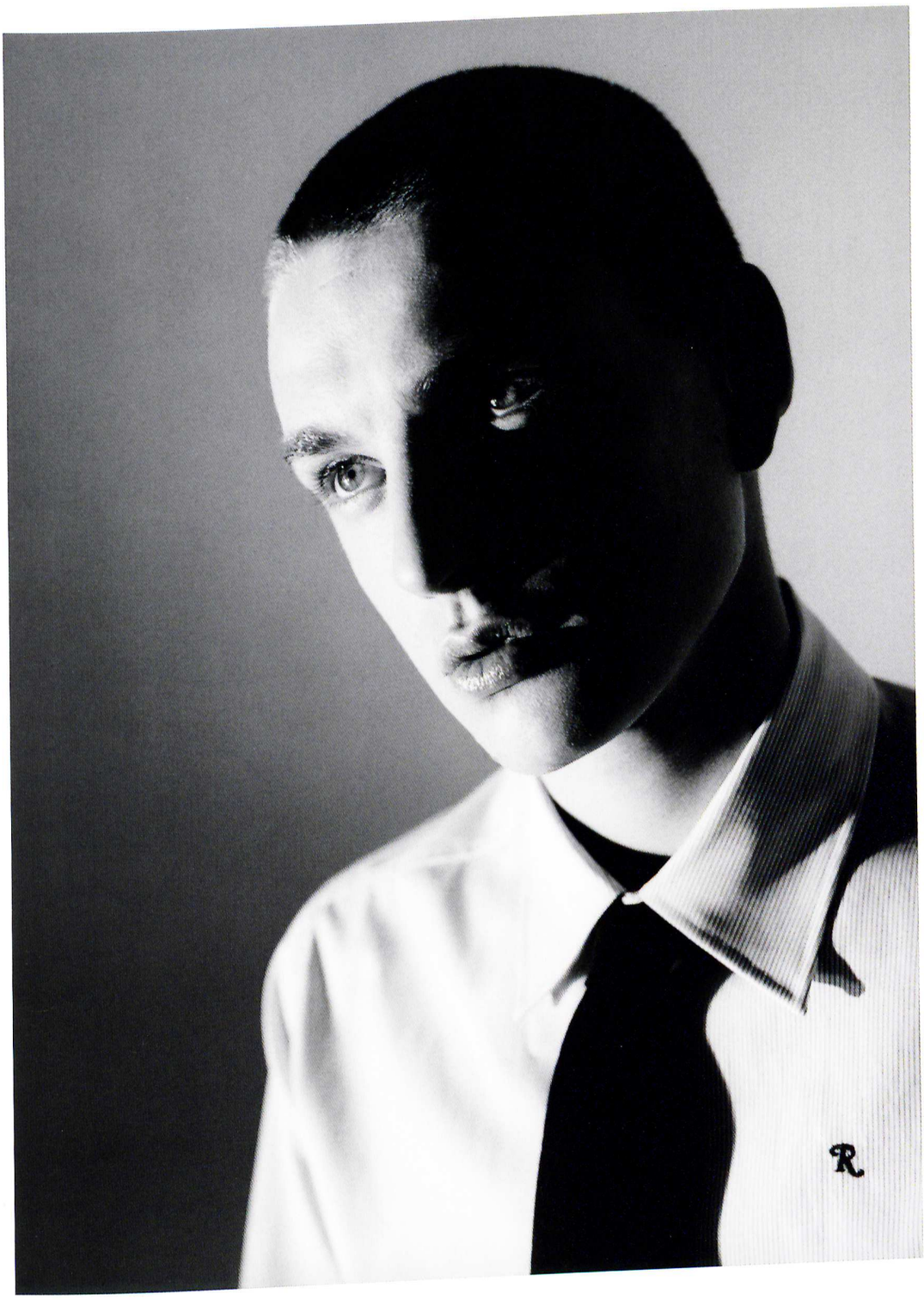
Special contribution *Raf Simons Redux*: Willy Vanderperre. Alexander. Autumn–Winter 2005–2006. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Paris, 2005.



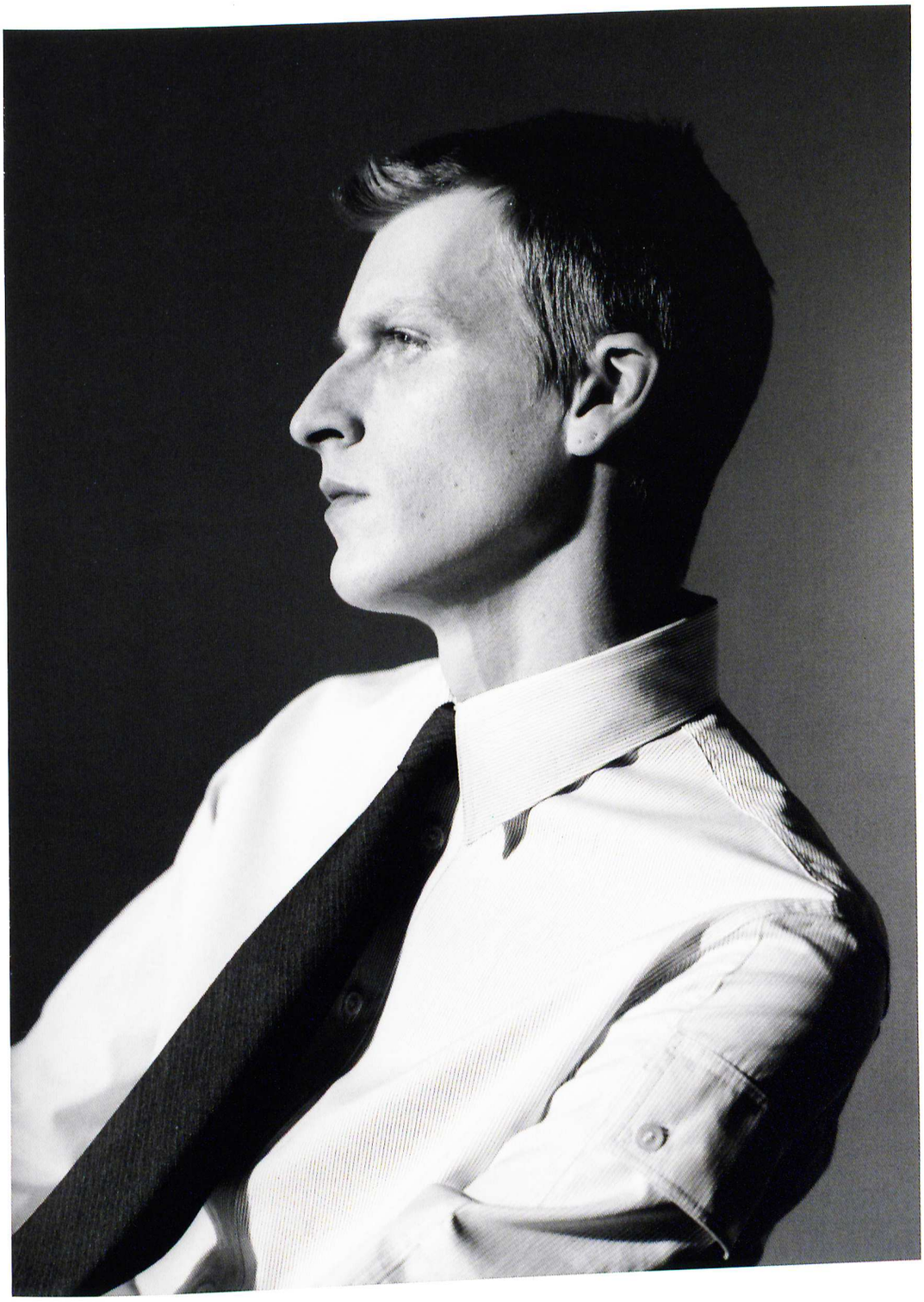
Autumn–Winter 2005–2006. Zeno. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Paris, 2005.



Autumn–Winter 2005–2006. Jonathan at Nine Daughters and a Stereo. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Paris, 2005.



Autumn–Winter 2005–2006. Robbie. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Paris, 2005.



10.
ARCHAEOLOGY

RAF SIMONS

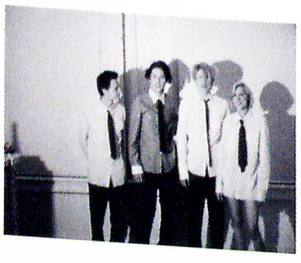
Born in 1968 in Neerpelt, Belgium.

*1991: graduates in Industrial Design and Furniture Design, Genk, Belgium. The previous year, as part of a pre-graduation project, Raf Simons has an internship at the Antwerp office of Walter Van Beirendonck, working on the presentation/decoration of the Van Beirendonck showrooms and collections. This internship lasts until 1993.

*1994: Raf Simons starts designing a tentative menswear collection. Consulting Linda Loppa, head of the Fashion Department of the Antwerp Royal Academy, for general comments on his ideas, she advises him to take up fashion professionally.

*January 1995: presents first menswear collection Autumn–Winter 1995–1996 at the Daniele Ghiselli showroom, Milan. One month later, the same collection is also shown in the private space of Linda Loppa. Accompanying video directed by Raf, Mike. Featuring: Camille, Mike. Soundtrack: Ciccone Youth. Time: 00:11:22. Format: VHS. Colour. Description: Mike and Camille walking on and off, showing the collection.

*03-07-1995: showroom video presentation (until 12-07-1995) for Spring–Summer 1996 at Le troisième oeil, 98 Rue Vieille du Temple, 75003 Paris. Accompanying video directed by Raf, Mike, Yourick. Featuring: Camille, Mike, Nico, Veronique. Soundtrack: Pulp. Time: 00:29:04. Format: VHS. Black and white. Description: Three boys and a girl hanging out at home, talking, fooling around, playing records.



*27-01-1996: showroom video presentation for Autumn–Winter 1996–1997 at Galerie Patricia Dorfmann, 61 Rue de la Verrerie, 75004 Paris. Collection title: We only Come out at Night. Accompanying video directed by Raf, Mike, Yourick, Stefan, Stephan, Veronique. Featuring: Veronique, Mike, Nico, Jeffrey, Tirna, Camille, Jeff, Bram, Chritt, Pascale, Ief, Erik. Soundtrack: Smashing Pumpkins, Kate Bush, Visage, Anne Clark, The Human League, Underworld. Time: 00:20:00. Format: VHS. Colour. Description: A group of friends at night watching B-horror videos, consulting the ouija board, playing ghost games and dressing up to go out.

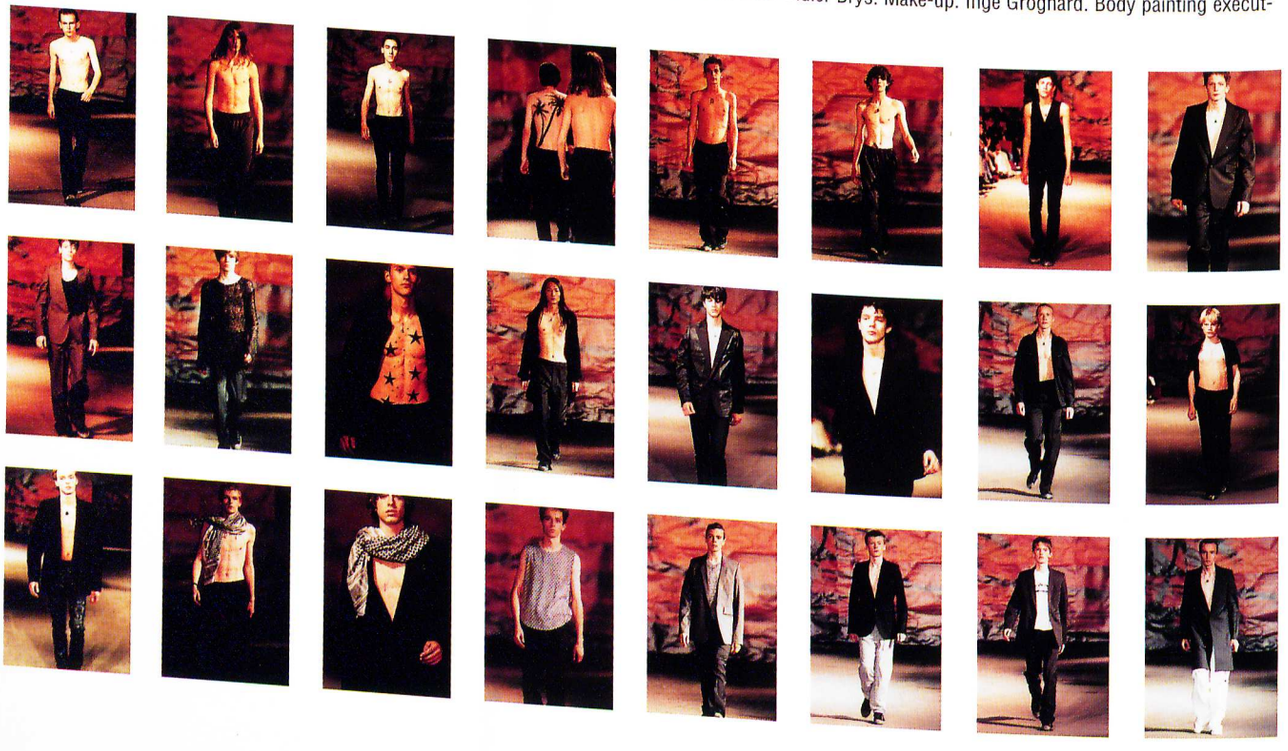
*15-06-1996: Darkdancer, a Raf Simons funding party at Pacific, Antwerp. Funds go to the production of the next Raf Simons collection video.

*04-07-1996: showroom video presentation for Spring–Summer 1997 at Studio Zero, 22 Rue de la Folie-Mericourt, 75011 Paris. Collection title: 16, 17, How to Talk to Your Teen. Accompanying video directed by Raf, Mike, Yourick, Alex, Stefan. Featuring: Veronique, Mike, Jeff, Nico, Tirna, Jeffrey, Sophie, Basile, Steve, Bram, Camille, Elisa, Pascale, Ief, Bjorn, Vanessa. Soundtrack: Depeche Mode, Japan, Underworld. Time: 00:19:14. Format: VHS. Colour. Description: A group of friends breaking free from dull, daily activity to skate, smoke, talk and gather at an imaginary meeting place.

*27/28-12-1996: first open casting, Antwerp.

*26-01-1997: show Autumn–Winter 1997–1998. 8:00 p.m. at 3 Impasse de Mont-Louis, 75011 Paris. No collection title. 63 outfits. Soundtrack: Smashing Pumpkins. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Photo: Bert Houbrechts, Etienne Tordoir

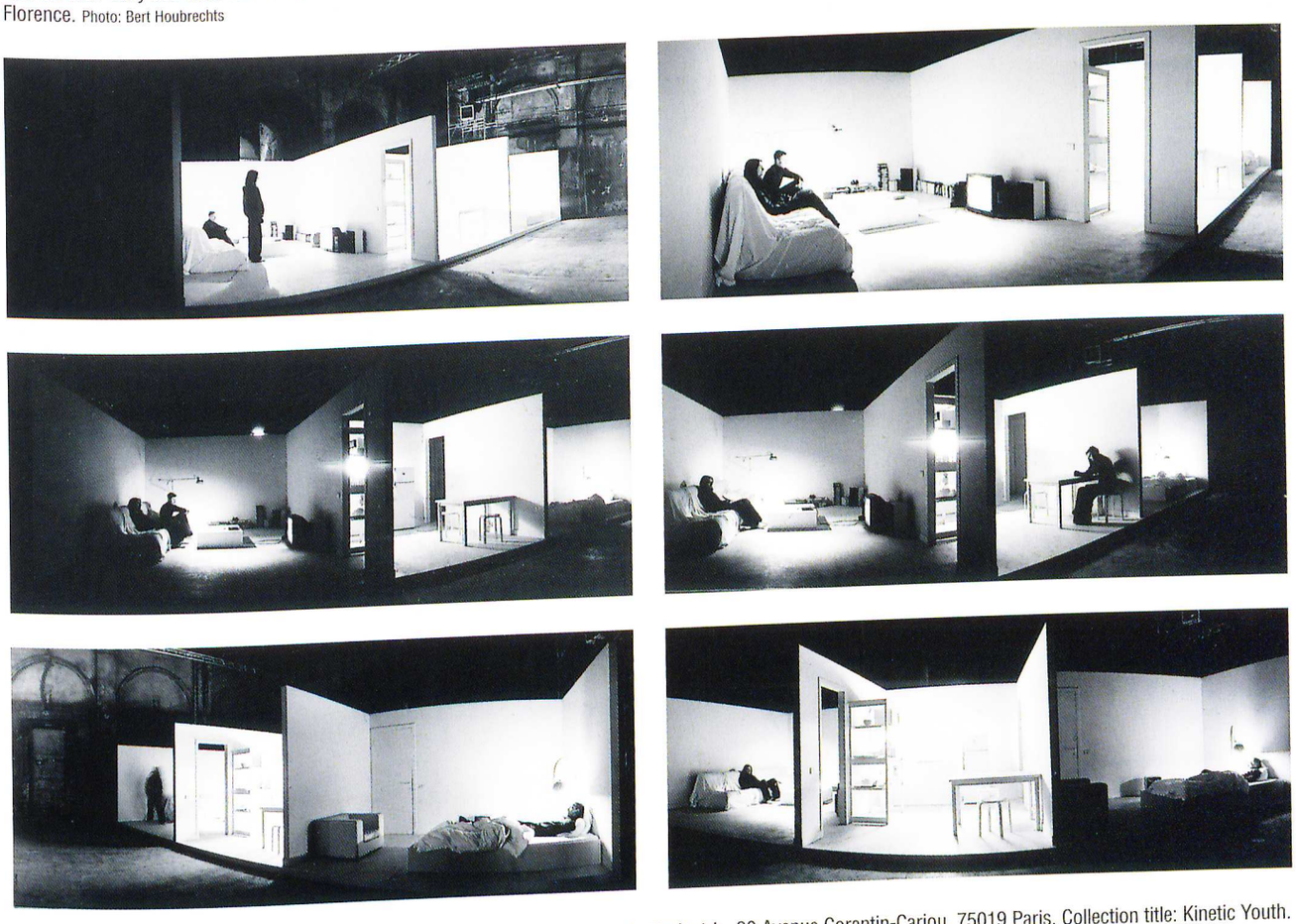
*04-07-1997: show Spring–Summer 1998. 9:30 p.m. at Espace du Genie de la Bastille, 45 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 75011 Paris. Collection title: Black Palms. 70 outfits. Soundtrack: Lords Of Acid, Reese & Santonio, Fatal Error, A Split Second. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard. Body painting executed by Jos Brands. Photo: Bert Houbrechts



*23-01-1998: show Autumn–Winter 1998–1999. 8:30 p.m. at Espace Moulin Rouge, 82 Boulevard de Clichy, 75018 Paris. Collection title: Radioactivity. 66 outfits. Soundtrack: Kraftwerk, Laurie Anderson, Underworld, Public Image Ltd. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Inge Grognard, Peter Philips. Body painting executed by Jos Brands. Photo: Marleen Daniels, Bert Houbrechts

*20-06-1998: show Spring–Summer 1999. Ruffo Research. 8:00 p.m. at Officina Generale ATM, Via Imperatore Teodosio 89, Milan. Raf Simons designs the menswear outfits, Veronique Branquinho designs the womenswear outfits. Soundtrack: Plastikman, Depeche Mode. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Ruffo Research

*25-06-1998: participates at *2001 (– 3)* exhibition, curated by Terry Jones, during Biennale della Moda, Florence. Two Antwerp boys from the Raf Simons cast take on their daily activities for the duration of the exhibition in a life-sized replica of a living space (living-room, bedroom and kitchen). Stazione Leopolda, Florence. Photo: Bert Houbrechts



*03-07-1998: show Spring–Summer 1999. 8:30 p.m. at Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, 30 Avenue Corentin-Cariou, 75019 Paris. Collection title: Kinetic Youth. 53 outfits. Soundtrack: David Bowie, Pink Floyd. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Marleen Daniels, Bert Houbrechts, Christopher Moore, Dario Puglia

*29-01-1999: show Autumn–Winter 1999–2000. 9:30 p.m. at E.M.G.P. Bâtiment 204, 50 Avenue du Président Wilson, F-93210 Saint-Denis La Plaine, Paris. Collection title: Disorder – Incubation – Isolation. 44 outfits. Soundtrack: Placebo, Suede, Ultravox, Art Of Noise. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team.
Photo: Carl Bruyndonckx, Marleen Daniels

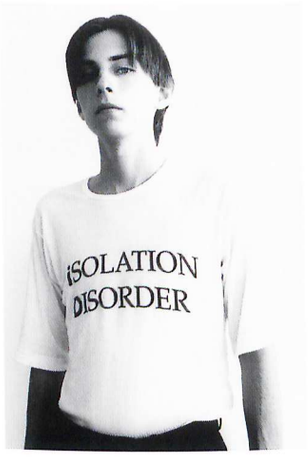
*01-03-1999: show Ruffo Research Autumn–Winter 1999–2000. 8:00 p.m. at Officina Generale ATM, Via Imperatore Teodosio 89, Milan. Soundtrack: The Smiths, De Brassers, Simon & Garfunkel. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*April 1999: Raf Simons designs exclusive stage gear (shirts) for Antwerp rock band dEUS. The shirts bear the band's name as well as the band's album title (*The Ideal Crash*). Photo: Bert Houbrechts

*05-07-1999: opening exhibition Raf Simons/Veronique Branquinho (until 30-07-1999) at Colette, 213 Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, 75011 Paris. The label Raf Simons is represented by photographs by Bert Houbrechts and Willy Vanderperre.

*06-07-1999: show Spring–Summer 2000. 8:00 p.m. at E.M.G.P. Bâtiment 204, 50 Avenue du Président Wilson, F-93210 Saint-Denis La Plaine, Paris. Collection title: Summa Cum Laude. 66 outfits. Soundtrack: Rotterdam Terror Corps, Dr. Macabre, No Gravity, The Stunned Guys, excerpts from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* OST by Charles Bernstein, excerpts from *Halloween* OST by John Carpenter, theme tune from *Knight Rider* by Glen A. Larson & Stu Phillips, theme tune from *Doctor Who* by Ron Grainer, theme tune from *The Hardy Boys* by Steward Phillips. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Marleen Daniels

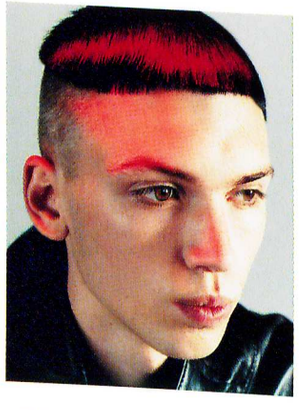
*August 1999: designs exclusive mail-order merchandise T-shirt for *i-D*. Photo: Willy Vanderperre



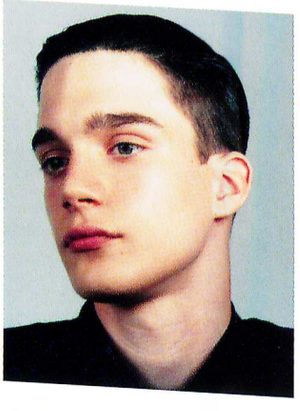
*September 1999: participates in *Vitrine* project. Antwerp, Belgium. Photo: Wim Wauman

*23-01-2000: show Autumn–Winter 2000–2001. 8:00 p.m. at Forum de la Plaine, E.M.G.P. Bâtiment 217, 50 Avenue du Président Wilson, F-93210 Saint-Denis La Plaine, Paris. Collection title: Confusion. 55 outfits. Soundtrack: Green Velvet. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Willy Vanderperre, catwalk photo: Etienne Tordoir

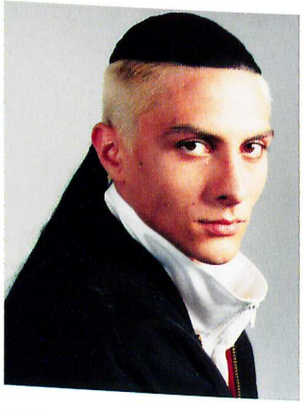
*January 2000: publication of the book *Isolated Heroes*, published by Connection NV, Antwerp. Photographed in July 1999, the project *Isolated Heroes* is a series of photographs by British photographer David Sims in collaboration with Raf Simons, featuring a selection of Raf Simons models, dressed in outfits from the Raf Simons Spring–Summer 2000 collection, with hair by Guido and make-up by Peter Philips. Each boy is credited with a serial number and his own first name. Photo: David Sims



isolated heroes n°14 Bart



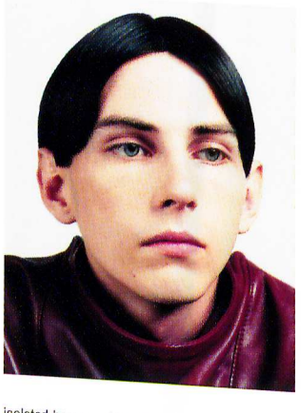
isolated heroes n°10 Stevie



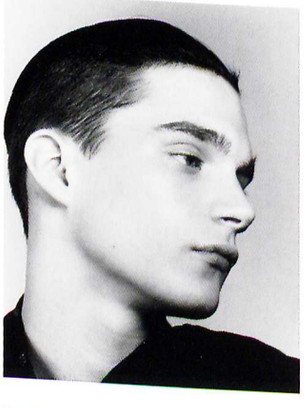
isolated heroes n°21 Pieter

isolated heroes n°11 Jonathan

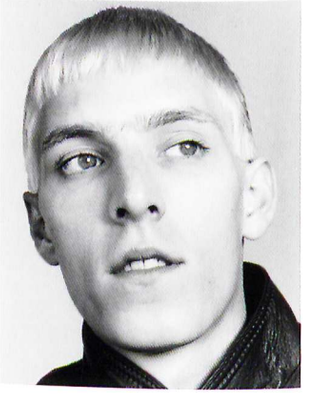
isolated heroes n°3 Staf



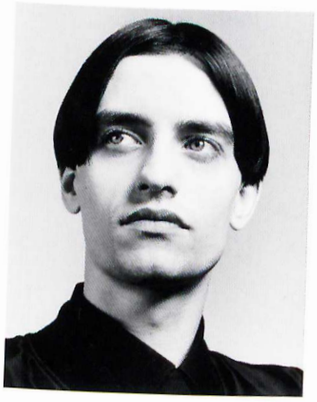
isolated heroes n°2 Alexander



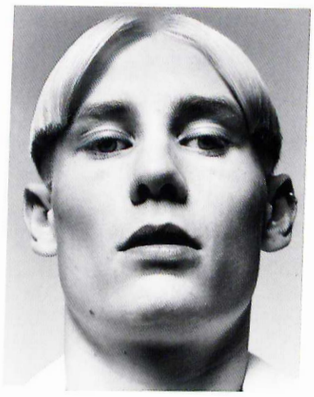
isolated heroes n°10 Stevie



isolated heroes n°5 Ken



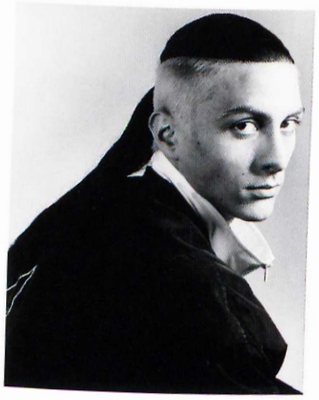
isolated heroes n°18 Hidde



isolated heroes n°27 Wim

isolated heroes n°1 Robbie

isolated heroes n°17 Vincent



isolated heroes n°21 Pieter

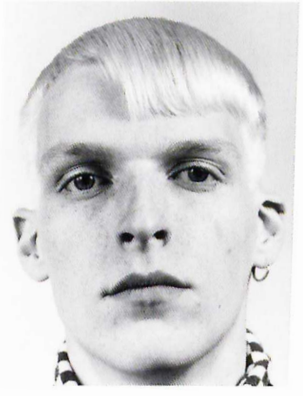
isolated heroes n°3 Staf

isolated heroes n°24 Wesley

isolated heroes n°25 Steve

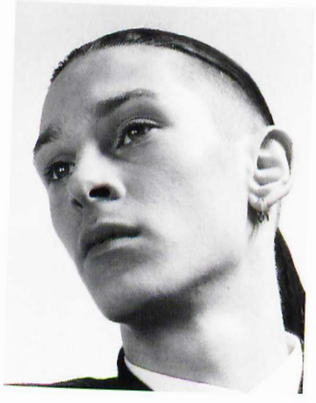
isolated heroes n°9 Werner

isolated heroes n°16 Andreas



isolated heroes n°1 Robbie

isolated heroes n°11 Jonathan

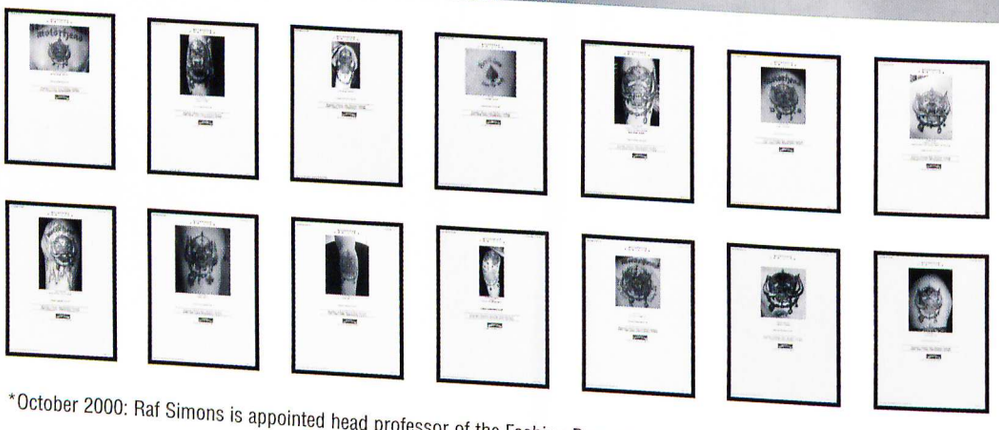


isolated heroes n°4 Gwen

*24-01-2000: opening exhibition *Isolated Heroes* (until 28-01-2000) at Purple Fashion Institute, 9 Rue Pierre Dupont, 75010 Paris. Framed works from the *Isolated Heroes* project by Raf Simons/David Sims.

*March 2000: sabbatical. Raf Simons shuts down his company to take a sabbatical. Since his label has been growing more and more successful, he feels restricted and confined by the business side of fashion. In order to re-energise his reason to work, he announces he will quit fashion and take time to consider new directions. Only after being approached by and offered a new co-operation deal with Belgian manufacturer Gysemans Clothing Industry, he takes up fashion once more in 2001, now with a smaller crew of collaborators.

*04-07-2000: opening exhibition *Statements V*, an art/culture project presented by Dornbracht, manufacturer of bathroom fittings and accessories, curated by Mike Meiré and Kerstin-Anna Hielscher (until 05-08-2000). Galerie Frank, 14 Rue des Pyramides, 75001 Paris. Asked to address and freely interpret the topic of bathroom culture, Raf Simons shows an installation. Photographs of the installation by Niels Schumm & Anuschka Blommers are presented (same dates) at Colette, supporter of *Statements V*, 213 Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, 75011 Paris. Photo: Niels Schumm & Anuschka Blommers

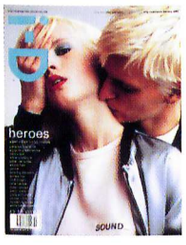


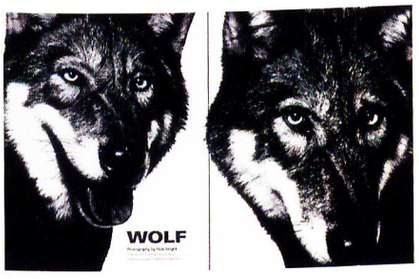
*October 2000: Raf Simons is appointed head professor of the Fashion Department of the University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Austria. Until June 2005.

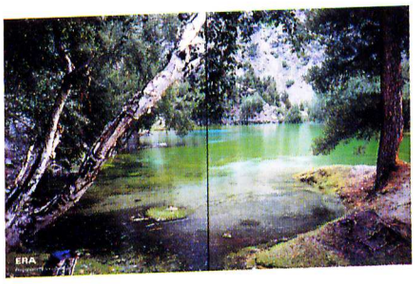
*October 2000: start of consultancy for a private Antwerp art collector.

*27-01-2001: show Autumn–Winter 2001–2002. 8:00 p.m. at 28–30 Rue Robert Witchiz, F-94200 Ivry Sur Seine, Paris. Collection title: Riot, Riot, Riot. 44 outfits. Soundtrack: Front 242, Dive, Aphex Twin, DJ Bountyhunter. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Bert Houbrechts, Kurt De Wit

*February 2001: Raf Simons is invited to act as special guest editor for *i-D*, no. 206. Contributions by: Vanessa Beecroft, Anuschka Blommers, Larry Clark, Anna Cockburn, Peter De Potter, Alexei Haye, Guido Palau, Bert Houbrechts, James Iha, Nick Knight, Brian Molko, Peter Saville, Niels Schumm, David Sims, Olivier Rizzo, Stephen Sprouse, Willy Vanderperre. Cover: Chloe & Robbie, photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Hair and make-up: Peter Philips







*26-05-2001: participates in *Mode2001*, Landed-Geland event, organized by Antwerpen Open and Flanders Fashion Institute, curated by Walter Van Beirendonck. Antwerp, Belgium. Raf Simons is included in *Radicals*, an open-air exhibition of rotating billboards at Antwerp's t'Eilandje, on the banks of the river Scheldt (until 07-10-2001). His contribution consists of 2 teenage pictures of Robbie Snelders and 1 commissioned portrait of Robbie Snelders by Willy Vanderperre.
Photo: Bert Houbrechts

*01-07-2001: show Spring–Summer 2002. 9:00 p.m. at Lycée Stanislas, 28 Rue du Montparnasse, 75006 Paris. Collection title: Woe onto those who spit on the fear generation... the wind will blow it back. 49 outfits. Soundtrack: Fuse, The Fall. Grooming: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Kurt De Wit, Bert Houbrechts

*July 2001: publication *Woe onto those who spit on the fear generation... the wind will blow it back*, published by Detlef bvba, Antwerp. Stills from video shoot by Willy Vanderperre, assisted by Els Voorspoels and team. Simultaneously, release of *Safe*, video directed by Raf Simons. Video shooting: Willy Vanderperre, assisted by Els Voorspoels and team. Time: 00:03:12. Format: VHS. Colour.

*31-10-2001: opening exhibition *Isolated Heroes* (until 22-12-2001) at Emily Tsingou Gallery, 10 Charles II Street, SW1Y 4AA London.

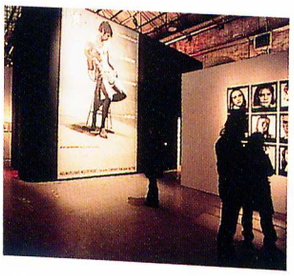
*10-11-2001: opening exhibition *Isolated Heroes* (until 08-12-2001) at Torch Gallery, Lauriergracht 94, 1016 RN Amsterdam. Photo: Claudie Crommelin

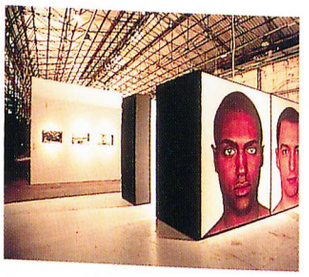
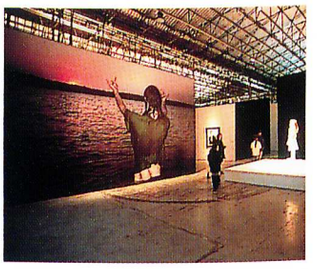
*26-01-2002: show Autumn–Winter 2002–2003. 9:00 p.m. at Lycée Stanislas, 28 Rue du Montparnasse, 75006 Paris. Collection title: Virginia Creeper. 59 outfits. Soundtrack: Terence Fixmer, Green Velvet, Public Image Ltd. Hair: Guido. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*30-06-2002: show Spring–Summer 2003. 9:00 p.m. at Parking Espace Austerlitz, 30 Quai d'Austerlitz, 75013 Paris. Collection title: Consumed. 30 outfits. Soundtrack: Joy Division, Tears For Fears, Manic Street Preachers. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*08-11-2002: opening exhibition *Isolated Heroes* (until 07-12-2002) at Bergman, Kaiserstrasse 23, Frankfurt am Main.

*09-01-2003: opening exhibition *The Fourth Sex: Adolescent Extremes* (until 09-02-2003), Stazione Leopolda, Florence, curated by Francesco Bonami and Raf Simons, produced by Fondazione Pitti Immagine Discovery. Project Director: Lapo Cianchi.
Artists: Vanessa Beecroft, Richard Billingham, John Bock, Slater Bradley, Olaf Breuning, Brian Calvin, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Keith Coventry, Chris Cunningham, Jeremy Deller, Keith Edmier, Cerith Wyn Evans, Larry Clark, Dan Graham, Katy Grannan, Andreas Gursky, Bill Henson, Noritoshi Hirakawa, Cameron Jamie, Jeremy Deller, Keith Edmier, Cerith Wyn Evans, Larry Clark, Dan Graham, Katy Grannan, Andreas Gursky, Bill Henson, Noritoshi Hirakawa, Cameron Jamie, Justine Kurland, Jim Lambie, Mark Leckey, Sharon Lockhart, Tony Matelli, Paul McCarthy, Bjarne Melgaard, Takashi Murakami, Tim Noble & Sue Webster, Simon Periton, Elizabeth Peyton, Raymond Pettibon, Charles Ray, Richard Prince, Collier Schorr, Ricky Swallow, Ed Templeton, Olga Tobreluts, Ari Versluis, Lee Wagstaff, Gillian Wearing.
Fashion: Veronique Branquinho, Benetton by Oliviero Toscani, Comme des Garçons, Emporio Armani, Gucci, Katherine Hamnett, Raf Simons, Stephen Sprouse, Walter Van Beirendonck, Bernhard Willhelm, Panos Yiapanis.
Photography and fashion photography: Anuschka Blommers & Niels Schumm, Corinne Day, Alexei Haye, Bert Houbrechts, Steven Klein, Nick Knight, Steven Meisel, Terry Richardson, Nigel Shafran/Melanie Ward, David Sims, Willy Vanderperre/Olivier Rizzo/Peter Philips, Karlheinz Weinberger. Accompanying catalogue edited by Maria Luisa Frisa, published by Charta/Fondazione Pitti Immagine Discovery, Milan-Florence. Cover: Robbie, photographed by Willy Vanderperre.
Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Make-up: Peter Philips

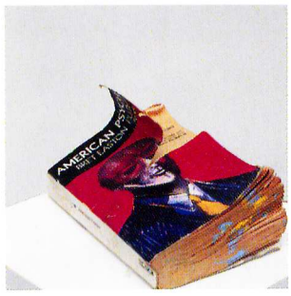


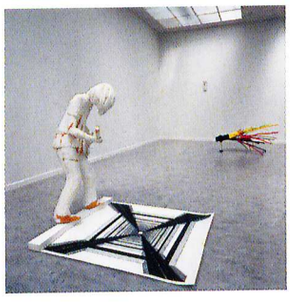



*26-01-2003: show Autumn–Winter 2003–2004. 9:00 p.m. at Salle Wagram, 39 Avenue de Wagram, 75017 Paris. Collection title: Closer. 41 outfits. Soundtrack: New Order. Hair: Tom Malomgré. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

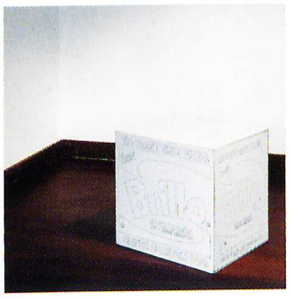
*25-05-2003: opening *Guided by Heroes*, a 4-part event curated by Raf Simons, initiated and produced by Art Centre Z33. Hasselt, Belgium.
a. 25-05-2003 (until 31-08-2003): exhibition of contemporary art and photography. Works by: Vanessa Beecroft, Don Brown, David Claerbout, Larry Clark, Anton Corbijn, Chris Cunningham, Rineke Dijkstra, Steven Gontarski, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Katy Grannan, Rachel Harrison, Evan Holloway, Alex K., Mark Leckey, Cady Noland, Simon Periton, Santiago Sierra, David Sims, Ricky Swallow. Photo: Robin Reynders/Z33
b. 11-07-2003 (until 09-11-2003): exhibition of contemporary art and performance. Works by: Keith Coventry, Chris Cunningham, Alex K., Tom Sachs, Mathew Sawyer, Red Sniper. Photo: Robin Reynders/Z33
c. 14-08-2003 (until 16-08-2003): outdoor film festival: *Far from Heaven* (Todd Haynes), *Donnie Darko* (Richard Kelly), *Bully* (Larry Clark), *Ken Park* (Larry Clark), *Zabriskie Point* (Michelangelo Antonioni), *Edward Scissorhands* (Tim Burton).
d. 28-08-2003: special stage at Pukkelpop Festival, Kiewit, Belgium: Dave Clarke, Cajmere, Fischerspooner, DJ Hell, Ladytron, The Hacker, Terence Fixmer, DAF, Martin Matiske, Atomizer. Photo: Eddy Daniels/Z33

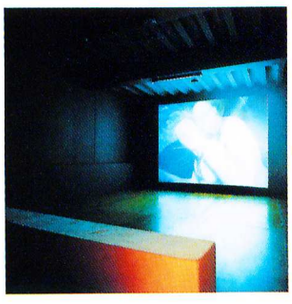
a.





b.





d.

*29-06-2003: show Spring–Summer 2004. 7:00 p.m. at Parc Floral de Paris, F-75012 Vincennes, Paris. Collection title: May the Circle Be Unbroken. 38 outfits. Soundtrack: Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, Echo & The Bunnymen, Sonic Youth, Nirvana, Afghan Wigs, Nine Inch Nails, Porno For Pyros, Virgin Prunes, Smashing Pumpkins, The Stone Roses, Bauhaus, Siouxsie & The Banshees, The Jesus And Mary Chain, Electrafixion, Jane's Addiction. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*29-11-2003: first prize Swiss Textiles Award. Contemporary Designer Night/Gwand Fashion Event, Lucerne. Raf Simons presents his Spring–Summer 2004 collection in an altered styling. Photo: Graziano Ferrari

*24-01-2004: show Autumn–Winter 2004–2005. 9:30 p.m. at 11 Rue Forest, 75018 Paris. Collection title: Life is, in itself and forever, shipwreck. To be shipwrecked is not to drown. The poor human being, feeling himself sinking into the abyss, moves his arms to keep afloat. This movement of the arms which is his reaction against his own destruction, is CULTURE – a swimming stroke... 33 outfits. Soundtrack: uncredited (white label). Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*03-07-2004: show Spring–Summer 2005. 9:30 p.m. at La Géode, 26 Avenue Corentin Cariou, 75019 Paris. Collection title: History of the World. 50 outfits. Soundtrack: New Order, Vangelis, Front 242, Orbital. Hair: Didier Brys. Make-up: Peter Philips and team. Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*September 2004: opening corner at Dover Street Market, 17–18 Dover St. W1S 4LT, London. Raf Simons invites artist Jan De Cock to design the complete booth.
Photo: Dover Street Market

*October 2004: new company structure: distribution deal with Futurenet (Europe, USA) and Mitsui (Asia), followed by licence agreement with Futurepresent (joint-venture of Futurenet and Mitsui Italia) in February 2005.

*29-01-2005: show Autumn–Winter 2005–2006. 9:30 p.m. at Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, Espace Condorcet, 30 Avenue Corentin Cariou, 75019 Paris. Collection title: History of My World. 49 outfits. Soundtrack: Depeche Mode, Simple Minds. Hair: Tomohiro Ohashi. Make-up: Peter Philips and team.
Photo: Etienne Tordoir

*15-03-2005: opening exhibition *Isolated Heroes* (until 22-03-2005) at Taka Ishii Gallery, 1-31-6 Shinkawa, Chuo-ku, Tokyo. Photo: Josui (B.P.B.) High Fashion

*01-06-2005: announcement: Raf Simons is named Creative Director of Jil Sander, effective as from 01-07-2005. Raf Simons will be responsible for the Jil Sander women's and men's collections, starting with the Autumn–Winter 2005–2006 season to be presented in Milan at the beginning of 2006.

*June 2005: launch of new line: Raf by Raf Simons.

*24-06-2005: opening *Raf Simons 1995–2005*, a 3-part event celebrating the 10th anniversary of the label Raf Simons, initiated and produced by the Fondazione Pitti Discovery. Giardini di Boboli, Florence.
a. opening video installation *Raf Simons Repeat*, concept and direction by Peter De Potter & Raf Simons.
b. launch retrospective book *Raf Simons Redux*, a book by Peter De Potter & Raf Simons, published by Charta/Fondazione Pitti Discovery, Milan-Florence.
c. show Spring–Summer 2006. Collection title: Icarus Surgit.

Robbie. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre. Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Grooming: Peter Philips. Antwerp, 1999.

Special contributors:

Cris Brodahl, artist. Belgium

Stef Driesen, artist. Belgium

Pieter Mulier, first creative assistant Raf Simons. Belgium

Olivier Rizzo, stylist. Belgium

Collier Schorr, artist. United States

Robbie Snelders, first assistant/general manager Raf Simons. Belgium

Willy Vanderperre, photographer. Belgium

Special contributor still-life photography for *Raf Simons Redux*:

Raymond Jacquemyns. Belgium

Text authors:

Francesco Bonami, art director Fondazione Pitti Discovery. Florence. Italy

Marc Foxx, gallery owner, Marc Foxx Gallery. Los Angeles. United States

Jo-Ann Furniss, editor-in-chief *Arena Homme Plus*. United Kingdom

Ashley Heath, publisher, editor. United Kingdom

Terry Jones, editor-in-chief *i-D*. United Kingdom

Collier Schorr, artist. United States

Thank you for making this book possible:

Jan Boelen, Z33
Sébastien Clivaz, *Arena Homme Plus*
Raf Coolen
Marleen Daniels
Swiss Textiles
Kurt De Wit
Wouter Frans
David Flamée, Flanders Fashion Institute
Inge Grognard
Kerstin Anna Hielscher, Meiré und Meiré
Bert Houbrechts
Sharon Keating
Steven Klein, Lorraine De Pietro at Steven Klein Studios
Boy Kortekaas
Nine Daughters and a Stereo
Candice Marks at Art Partner
Priska Morger
Daniel Peddle (for Collier Schorr)
Peter Philips
Alda & Jaak Simons
David Sims
Mario Sorrenti
Ronald Stoops
Etienne Tordoir
Adriaan Van Der Have, Torch Gallery, Amsterdam
Annika McVeigh, Dover Street Market, Comme des Garçons
Els Voorspoels

Very special thanks to Lapo Cianchi and his team: Elisabetta Basilici Menini, Lisa Chiari, Ginevra Favilli, Marco Luppini, Marina Mele, Andrea Mugnaini, Anna Pazzagli, Cristina Ranco, Roberto Ruta, Irene Stellati, Francesca Tacconi
Very special thanks to Laboratorium: Maria Luisa Frisa, Alessandro Gori, Serena Becagli, Mario Lupano, Angelo Teardo and Federica Cimatti
Very special thanks to Stefano Martinetto and his team

Thank you, all the many, many people involved in the complete history of ten years of Raf Simons. You know who you are. Special thanks to the Raf Simons team: Elke Bernaers, Marc Gysemans, Keith Hioco, Marleen Maesen, Pieter Mulier, Robbie Snelders, Mandana Tischeh, Marieke van Dongen

Press Raf Simons:
Kuki de Salvertes and Sébastien de Brito, Girault-Totem. Paris. France
Akiko Kaneko, Sann Frères. Tokyo. Japan

design coordination: Gabriele Nason
editorial coordination: Emanuela Belloni
with Filomena Moscatelli
copywriting and press office: Silvia Palombi Arte&Mostre, Milano
web design and online promotion: Barbara Bonacina

cover: Robbie. Photographed by Willy Vanderperre.
Styling: Olivier Rizzo. Grooming: Peter Philips. Antwerp, 1999.

The photos published in this book have been used by kind concession of the photographers, photo archives, and magazines consulted. Fondazione Pitti Discovery apologizes and is available if any photographic credits have been unintentionally omitted.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing of copyright holders and of the publisher.

© 2005
Edizioni Charta, Milan
© Fondazione Pitti Discovery, Florence
© Raf Simons for his works
© the authors for their texts

All rights reserved

ISBN 88-8158-543-X

Edizioni Charta
via della Moscova, 27
20121 Milano
Tel. +39-026598098/026598200
Fax +39-026598577
e-mail: edcharta@tin.it
www.chartaartbooks.it

Printed in Italy

RAF SIMONS REDUX
a project of Fondazione Pitti Discovery
by Peter De Potter and Raf Simons
edited by Maria Luisa Frisa
art direction by Peter De Potter
graphic design: Alessandro Gori.Laboratorium
editorial coordination: Serena Becagli.Laboratorium (visuals),
Angelo Teardo.Laboratorium (visuals), Federica Cimatti (texts)
editing and translations: Emily Ligniti

project director: Lapo Cianchi
public relations: Sibilla della Gherardesca with Sybille Bollmann
press office: Cristina Brigidini, Francesca Tacconi
media relations: Alessandra Buompadre, Cristina Ranco, Roberto Ruta,
with Gaia Cappelli and Irene Stellati
web: Andrea Mugnaini with Ginevra Favilli
production secretariat: Elisabetta Basilici Menini
reception and logistics: Lisa Chiari

for Pitti Immagine Uomo 68
with the contribution of CFMI

CENTRO DI FIRENZE PER LA MODA ITALIANA
chairman: Alfredo Canessa
secretary-general: Alberto Scaccioni

PITTI IMMAGINE
chairman: Gaetano Marzotto
CEO: Raffaello Napoleone
executive general director: Antonello Ginanneschi
communications and special projects director: Lapo Cianchi
public relations director: Sibilla della Gherardesca
administration and finance director: Andrea Mainardi
marketing and development director: Agostino Poletto
press office coordinator: Cristina Brigidini

FONDAZIONE PITTI DISCOVERY
chairman: Alfredo Canessa
secretary-general and proxy: Lapo Cianchi
art director: Francesco Bonami
fashion curator: Maria Luisa Frisa

Italian texts are available on www.pittimmagine.com

Memory Badges 2 (revisiting Spring–Summer 1996) by Peter De Potter. Photographed by Raymond Jacquemyns. Antwerp, 2005.

MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME
MEMORY IS MY HOME